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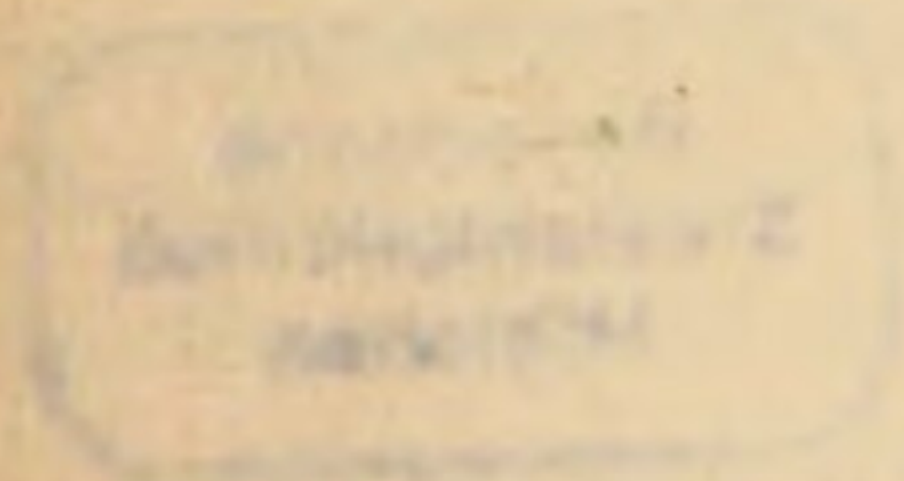
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THE
LIFE AND TIMES
OF
SELINA
COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

BY A MEMBER OF
THE HOUSES OF SHIRLEY AND HASTINGS.

FIFTH THOUSAND—WITH A COPIOUS INDEX.

VOL. II.

[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]

LONDON: WILLIAM EDWARD PAINTER, STRAND.

1841.

THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF

SEYMOUR

COUNTLESS OF HUNTINGDON

BY A MEMBER OF

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND HUNTINGDON

WITH A CORRESPONDENCE

VOLUME II

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1881

INTRODUCTION.

VOL. II.

THOSE who have perused the former Volume with attention and candour, will have made acquaintance with so many of the company, and have been so much delighted with their society, as to require little further introduction. As, however, the great object of Biography is to teach by example, and to embody principles in living forms; and as the original Compiler of *The Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon*, with astonishing industry and success, has collected facts, and left them to speak for themselves—the Writer of this paper may be allowed to trace these facts to their proper sources, and to endeavour to ascertain the principles which actuated and characterised those who took the lead in the Revivals of the last century. In this exercise, however, little aid is to be obtained from their general name; for, as in individuals, so in societies, terms of denomination are more commonly accidental than intended, and seldom, therefore, indicative of the great principles of the classes which they designate. It would, indeed, be curious and amusing to examine the names of the most distinguished of the species, and to see how they agree with the master-quality of their wearers; though it would generally end in the same uncertainty as the etymological disputes on the name of CICERO: for whether we determine on it as an indication of agriculture or of a nasal mark, we must learn from other quarters the philosophy and the eloquence by which this Roman was distinguished.

Without adverting to the ancient use of the term *Methodist*,

or to its employment either in France or in England, it is enough to say, that it little more expresses the peculiarities of the creed and practice of any class of Christians than does that of *Swaddlers*—a name given to the followers of WESLEY by a drunken Irishman: nay, in some respects, however orderly and methodical their private deportment, there was an evident disregard of method in WESLEY and WHITEFIELD and their followers: thus they had to deviate from the rules of the Established Church, on the one hand, and were unwilling to submit to the order of what are called regular Dissenters, on the other; they were especially under the guidance of circumstances, and were determined to further the Gospel in every possible way, however irregular and unmethodical it might appear. We must look, therefore, to other means of information to ascertain the leading principles of *Methodism*.

It may not be improper, in this place, to remark, that men of the world have unintentionally raised this term to a pitch of distinguished honour, and, at the same time, given a clue to its right interpretation: they have agreed to brand those persons who have shown more than ordinary concern for the interests of morality and piety with the name—METHODIST. If a man of quality has avoided scenes of dissipated amusement, or a statesman been regular at Church, and philanthropic and zealous in the cause of enslaved and suffering humanity—he has been called a *Methodist*! The most rigid Churchmen, if they have advocated the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel, have been considered *Methodists*. Even in our day, let the gay become serious, and the formal penitent and practical Christians, and they are *Methodists*! Could greater homage be paid to a name? Could a more unequivocal avowal be made, that Methodism, in the estimation of the irreligious, is identical with true Christianity? It is not, indeed, asserted that this estimate is perfectly correct, only that it will be difficult for those who feel hostility towards Methodism to point out any thing, in modern times, more like primitive Christianity than much of that which is recorded in the accompanying pages.

The term *Methodist*, correctly applied, includes both the

followers of WESLEY and those who, with the late Countess of HUNTINGDON and WHITEFIELD, receive the Calvinistic doctrines. *The Life and Times of the Countess* has, of course, to do with the latter, and the following remarks are more especially applicable to this division; yet, granting a considerable difference in the views of the two great sections, it may be asserted that the characteristic principles of Methodism are, in both, essentially the same.

As the principle of the Reformation, next to the paramount authority of the Word of God, was justification by faith, and not by works; so it is evident, that early Methodism was distinguished by the prominence which it gave to this and other kindred doctrines. It loved CHRIST more than it loved either PLATO or ARISTOTLE, and disdained to urge even social duties by heathenish arguments, or to consider these duties as the whole of godliness; it presented the facts of human sinfulness and of Divine redemption in a relief so bold as to startle many into observation, alarm, and earnestness. The Apostolic topics of Repentance toward God, and Faith toward our LORD JESUS CHRIST, were the themes of those holy men who were its first promoters; and gracious, though not miraculous, signs and wonders followed their ministrations. Man's ingenuity is ever inventing new subjects of public discussion, and these, though often not only beautiful, but likewise in strict accordance with the Gospel itself, yet being very subordinate, or nice and metaphysical deductions, their exhibition has but a feeble influence on the heart, while "the foolishness of preaching" the same few, simple truths, which characterised the Apostolic addresses, becomes a lever, by which society is not only moved but elevated—the power of God unto salvation. The Church may, through zeal not accordant with knowledge, or through less respectable means, injure this instrument or employ it unskilfully; but when will she learn that the *abuse* of Evangelical preaching must be corrected, not by the substitution of another Gospel, which is not another—but by a better use of that which God has appointed to save them who believe? "HE is a Rock, his work is perfect," and his

method of blessing mankind admits of no human improvement. The prominence, therefore, given to the leading truths of Revelation by the early Methodists, constituted at once their characteristic and their glory.

It will likewise be seen, in *The Life and Times of the Countess*, that a conviction generally actuated the number of this body, that they had to promulgate the Word of GOD, which LIVETH and abideth for ever. Not only the doctrines themselves that were delivered, but the *vivida vis animi* that inspired the preachers, gave warmth and force to public addresses, and awakened sympathy in the congregations. The conscience, too, more than even the passions, was assaulted; the arrow had not only force but *point*, and, under a divine guidance, pierced the heart. The discourses, indeed, of some of the auxiliaries might be without the nice discriminations of logic and the classic embellishments of rhetoric, but they were rich in evangelical truth, “sprinkled with blood,” and delivered with affection and fervour. These social graces, together with an elocution of extraordinary command, gave to the addresses of WHITEFIELD, in particular, a charm and a mastery, which neither the collier nor the philosopher could altogether resist; and invested the less powerful but more argumentative WESLEY with legitimate means of access to the hearts of his hearers. This animation happily diffused itself through all denominations, and thus formed a new era in the history of the pulpit. The unusual, though not novel practice, which the first Methodists adopted, of delivering their sermons, either extempore, or memoriter, or from short notes, aided them in this work; but, next to the gracious power with which GOD was pleased to clothe their ministrations, the great charm and secret of their energy and impression was the fervour of their own hearts. The fire burned within them, and, giving warmth to their discourses, diffused a glow through all their vast congregations.

Nor ought we, perhaps, to overlook the improvement in Psalmody, in the introduction of hymns, and of a more lively style of singing, in which the Methodists excelled, though WATTS and other sacred minstrels had set them an example. This gave a degree of life to public worship unknown to congregations,

in which slow music is robbed of all its sublimity by its defective performance, and where words are sung, excellent for the service of the temple, but being unsuited to our dispensation, are foreign to the sympathies of Christian worshippers, and, indeed, unintelligible.

It will be seen in these Memoirs, that some of the first composers of the age, and many persons of good musical and poetic talents, gathered around the Countess, to whose lyres we are indebted for many of the sweetest of all sweet sounds to charm our moments of social devotion, and to aid our rehearsal of the song of Moses and the Lamb. The Poet Laureat, in his *Life of Wesley*, carried away by the influence of his own art, has given too much to poetry and to scenery, by attributing the effect of preaching to fancy and landscape; but, with all its plainness, Methodism had much of imagination and pathos, and was thus philosophically adapted to human nature, carrying its credentials in its success.

The object, too, of those whose pious actions are here recorded, gave grandeur and power to their public ministry. Heedless, in a great degree, of denominational and sectarian attainments, their sole purpose was to bring sinners to JESUS CHRIST: and this object is so evidently paramount, that men felt and recognized its sublimity. Instead of the amusements of secondary, if not unimportant speculations, and the discussion of the questionable assumptions of Ecclesiastical Polity, the awful truths of sin, ruin, redemption, grace, death, judgment, hell, and heaven, came down upon the crowds, as the visitation of the prophet, in the wind, and in the earthquake, and in the fire, and in the still small voice.

It is one of the numerous proofs of the divinity of the Gospel, that the grandeur and force of its dispensation does not consist in the subtile and eloquent discussion of its more delicate and recondite doctrines, but in plain and earnest statements of its broad and evident principles; and all shyness of those principles, through fear of awakening prejudice, or through desire of gratifying curiosity by widening the field of inquiry, will render

the ministry tame and unhonoured—the word of man rather than the word of God.

The character of the agency employed in the revival here recorded is certainly worthy of consideration. In moral qualities, indeed, this agency possessed great uniformity; the same simplicity and godly sincerity, the same stirring conviction of man's necessity and of the riches of Divine grace, pervading the whole, even although the views of one part, on subjects of minor importance, did not accord with those of the other. Nothing, however, could be more diversified than the earlier agency of Methodism, in respect to rank, and education, and natural talent. The more originating and ostensible instruments of this work of the Gospel were Clergymen of the National Church—men of regular training, and strongly attached to the body with whom they had been nurtured: these soon found it necessary to call in the aid of the laity, some of whom, like HOWEL HARRIS, had enjoyed liberal advantages; while others, though generally possessed of strong, good sense, had received only a very ordinary education. To these a group of persons, considerable in number, of the highest rank and of the most cultivated habits, publicly and zealously attached themselves. The sanction of these distinguished persons encouraged those who were toiling through good report and evil report; the doors of utterance which by them were opened, their own private exertions and liberality, together with their influence on the various classes of the community, were of incalculable value. This agency, however, was as unusual as it was miscellaneous; and the world equally wondered to see Clergymen preaching in houses, and barns, and fields; persons not in orders, nay, even illiterate, co-operating with them; and the rich and noble aiding their exertions by personal attendance on ministrations deemed irregular, and by great sacrifice and exertion. This disturbed the noiseless tenor of Christian profession, and startled many into attention and prayerfulness; while others exclaimed, with equal surprise and dislike, "We have seen strange things to-day!"

There was throughout something in this economy admirably

adapted to the work intended to be performed. Even amidst great irregularities, Church prejudice, so prevalent at that time in our country, was in some measure disarmed, by Clergymen taking the lead; and by the employment of laymen, the agency was multiplied a hundred-fold, and met the mass of the people on their own ground, addressing them in a style which they could easily comprehend; while the highest orders in society were brought within the circle of its influence. The co-operation of the noble and wealthy with the Clergy and common people, was also one means of diffusing the blessings of vital religion in the Established Church, as it was of increasing the number and of elevating the tone of Evangelical Dissenters.

The revival which animates these pages owes, indeed, some of its success to the accidental circumstances of the social body. Mind had been excited to activity; the character of Civil and Religious Liberty had been investigated in the Bangorian and other controversies; the moral sense of the multitude, and the piety of the few, by various means, had increased; while preaching had become too commonly, both in the Church and in the Meeting-house, dull and lifeless where it was Evangelical, and void of the distinguishing truths of the Gospel, where it was animate and engaging.

The ground, therefore, on which the friends and coadjutors of the Countess were presented, as in a painting, added considerably to the effect of the figures, giving them space and relief; for common sense, admitting the Gospel to be of God, nay, Infidelity itself, as in the case of BOLINGBROKE, saw and confessed that they had the advantage. Had the ministers of religion been more orderly and active, and had they preached something more like the Gospel, in doctrine and in spirit, the contrast would not have been so great and striking, but the darkness of the night disposed the people to hail the dawn of the morning.

No adventitious circumstances, however, can account for the wonderful success of early Methodism. The time to favour Zion, yea, the set time, was come; and the impression, the extent, the continuance of the work—place it beyond a question

that it *is of God*. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.” The doctrine of the Divine Sovereignty, in relation to converting and sanctifying influence, has indeed been perverted, to the relaxing of moral obligation; but it is impossible not to see it illustrated in the history of the Church. Such a tide of success, at times when least expected, and through a channel in little esteem, flows in upon her, that all must attribute it, not to earthly but to heavenly attraction, and recognize in it the good pleasure of God.—“He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy.” Were we, indeed, qualified to take a view of all the circumstances of the work, we should doubtless see an agreement between cause and effect, an aptitude in the employment of appointed means to convey the great blessings received; and thus should we be confirmed in a belief of the connexion between sovereignty and equity,—that grace reigns through righteousness. As, however, we are ignorant of this fitness and connexion, and of the modes of gracious operations on the human mind, we must deal with facts, and finding the effect so much exceeds the *apparent* circumstantial cause, resolve the question in the sentiment of our blessed Lord, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” Taking this view of the subject, we shall at once be constrained to ascribe the glory of success to its proper Author, and excited to the performance of duty, since, as far as we know, the right employment of the means always results in the attainment of the end. Let Christians, and especially Christian ministers, rival the characters here portrayed in piety, in united activity, and, above all, in faith and prayer; and sovereign grace, having already acted in preparing an agency, will soon appear, in the enlarged success of their efforts. “I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.”

It may appear strange that the Calvinistic branch of Methodism, commencing under auspices equally favourable with the Wesleyan, should, in the present age, be so much less flourishing than its cotemporary. Reflection, however, on the real number of the former will, in some degree, qualify wonder—a number far greater than appears to a hasty observer: for while the

congregations associated in the Countess's Connexion, WHITEFIELD's, and ROWLAND HILL's, together with the more Congregational, which, nevertheless, adopt some of the principles and forms of Methodism, make an aggregate of considerable amount; no common name has been assumed, and, consequently, the whole, as such, has never been presented to the view. Their public operations and contributions, likewise, have not been distinctively preserved, but have been blended with those of other and more conspicuous denominations. Ecclesiastic statistics will, however, show, that when all the congregations in England which naturally range themselves with this class of Christians are added to the more ostensible Calvinistic Methodists in Wales, the number is by no means inconsiderable.

These assertions are not made to disguise the fact of the great majority and importance of the Wesleyans, but to correct a common error, of underrating the other section of Methodism. It is indeed, at times, no easy task to account for relative prosperity, as the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; and the Writer can only hazard the avowal of the reasons which appear to himself in some way to account for the less popularity and influence of the body, to which, nevertheless, he gives a decided preference.

A wish to shun even an approach to controversy, forbids more than the avowal of the fact, that some doctrines, as they flatter human conceit of power and merit, are likely to be generally received by the world; and the followers of WHITEFIELD, having counted the cost, have rejected these, and espoused the less popular. In doing this, however, they believe they act correctly, (John vi. 65, 66); but the Writer would rather reflect on the failings of his own than on those of any other body of men who hold the Head, and who manifest a sincere and active devotedness to the LORD JESUS.

It was never the paramount object of the leaders of the Calvinistic Methodists in England to found a sect which should be perfectly distinct from all other denominations of Christians. They could not, indeed, but see, at an early period of their existence, that without cohesion and order, the body could not

long remain active and efficient, and they necessarily, therefore, formed themselves into an association: still, however, more intent on reviving the things which were ready to perish, and on extending, by every practicable means, the sphere of Evangelical exertions, than of building up their own house, their influence was rather felt than acknowledged, and was seen in its effects on all the tribes of the spiritual Israel more than in its instrumentality. Perhaps in this catholic way a greater quantity of good was effected than would have been produced by more denominational concentration; but it is easy to see that this was not the way to render Calvinistic Methodism numerically imposing. An army, however numerous, distributed over a whole country, and allowed to mix with its citizens, even while retaining the military spirit and forming the safety of the community, is not so easily distinguishable from the people, or so great in appearance, as that which is never disbanded or seen without its uniform.

It is not so easy to find an apology for the decrease of a spirit of zealous itinerancy in the Calvinistic body, which has doubtless contributed to the state of numerical inferiority; while the other section of Methodists has, amidst all the changes of circumstances, preserved its youthful activity, and, almost heedless of what the other sections of the Church are doing, has maintained its earliest disposition to run to and fro, that knowledge may be increased; the followers of WHITEFIELD and the Countess, associating more with regular pastors, have altered their habits, and rather devoted their energies each to a single congregation, than to a district or a nation. This very congregation, too, has often become isolated, and thus the original Connexion has been weakened. This paper does not enter on the question of the comparative advantages of an itinerant and of a settled ministry, but merely asserts a fact which will account for the present state of things in the two communities to which it refers.

In this inquiry the different constitutions and modes of acting of the two bodies must not be overlooked. WESLEY had the penetration to know that men will never do any thing great, so long as they are dependent on others; and the magnanimity to allow his successors to project their own measures, and to feel a

personal responsibility for their own attempts. Whatever of management he showed to keep the power in his own hands at first, and, indeed, during his life, all must admire his foresight in the constitution of a Conference, which should come into real legal operation at his decease. Unhappily for the spread of the other branch of Methodism, it has generally adopted a *Trustee* superintendence: this system, as far as the extension of the general cause is concerned, has not worked well; it has created a legal authority which may be opposed to the moral and ecclesiastical power; it has either crippled the energies of ministers, or removed them to other spheres; and, by making them feel that, excluded in a great degree from responsible management, they acted a subordinate part, it has paralyzed talent which ought to have been kept healthy by exercise, and to have been encouraged in every legitimate attempt at proselyting mankind to the faith.

The Wesleyans, on the other hand, conscious, as being their own executive power, of personal responsibility, have been roused to action, and have almost become a Parliament in Council, while they give an impulse to all the assemblies which they direct and edify. "Use talent and have talent," has been beautifully illustrated in this remarkable people. Had their Founder placed his ministers under the control of a few lay or clerical trustees, whatever their personal excellence, Wesleyan Methodism would exhibit a very different front from that which it now presents.

The various sub-divisions of Calvinistic Methodism, likewise, though cordially united, have never coalesced and co-operated as one integral body. No union, except that of brotherly affection and an occasional exchange of services, exists between the English and the Welsh Methodists: the Connexions of the Countess, and WHITEFIELD, and HILL—strange as it may appear—have never properly met in council and acted in concert, to say nothing of the numerous congregations, unattached to either of these communities, though using their forms, and, in some degree, acknowledging their principles.

How far a general combination of design and operation would

have benefited the Church, is a question not here agitated; but all these reasons, and others which might be adduced, will account for the fact of WHITEFIELD's followers not being so numerous as those of WESLEY.

Good men are at issue respecting the degree of importance to be attributed, in the present state of religious parties, to the perpetuity of Calvinistic Methodism. It is thought that the Established Church possesses so large a number of truly Evangelical Ministers, and that orthodox Dissenters are so much alive to the furtherance of the Gospel, that a third body is a superfluity. Those, indeed, who read *The Life and Times of the Countess* carefully, and learn how few and how marked the pious and Evangelical Clergy then were, and how lifeless many of the Dissenters, will, with joy and thanksgiving, exclaim, as they survey the present number and the fervour of the preachers "What hath GOD wrought!" Yet, as something between the two parties was the means of reviving both at first, so we believe that the continuance of an agency intervening and exciting, is of the greatest importance to their life and prosperity. Much, however, of its utility depends on Methodism preserving its true character, which character, is a freedom from hostility to the National Church, though excluded from a general co-operation with it; and, at the same time, while uniting most cordially with the Evangelical Dissenters in great public measures to further the Gospel, a freedom from Ecclesiastical invective, and an employment, as occasion permits, of the devotional formularies of the Common Prayer Book. Where this character is honestly supported, we conceive that Calvinistic Methodism, warm and marked with the sign of the Cross, works most beneficially. It is a sort of adjusting and balancing power, suiting the ever-varying circumstances of the community, and meeting the views and the wants of a large class of persons, who conscientiously object to the National form, if every part is to be adopted, but who prefer the use of those selections which they judge to be most excellent—and with reason: for if a man dislike his present position, why should he be compelled to travel to the antipodes? If there be a *few* things to which he can-

not subscribe, must he array himself against *every* thing in the Established Church? Why may we not here, as in other inquiries, presume that truth and utility are ECLECTIC? The practical advantage and excellence of these principles has been acknowledged by some of the best men of all parties; and it was gratifying to the real friends of the Connexion of the Countess to see, a few years ago, before the present controversies had inflicted a sort of panic on good Churchmen, the tide of Ecclesiastical Reform set in so strongly towards their own forms and principles. Men of distinction were recommending, by means of the press, considerable changes in the National Church, most of which tended to something like the system of the best-conducted chapels belonging to the Countess of HUNTINGDON. The services, for instance, were proposed to be abridged, and freed from some objectionable passages; the endowments to be more equalized, and brought to benefit the population as it is located at the present time; the patronage to be much more regulated by the voice of the congregations than it now is. The improvement, also, in Psalmody, the cottage meetings, the more general aid given by the laity to the Clergy, the erection of churches dependent on voluntary support, and many other changes in the Establishment, are proofs of the correctness of our assertion.

On the other hand, the pious Dissenters, excited by a thousand moving causes, such as the great evangelizing Institutions, the spirit of revival, and the re-action of the Church party, have thrown off much that encumbered them, and have desired improvement in their own bodies. Unions of denomination and of district have almost destroyed the isolated character of Congregationalism; and not a few of the advocates for free prayer have avowed an inclination, in connexion with extemporaneous devotion, to employ a well-selected Liturgy. These facts are mentioned only to show, that a tacit declaration has been given, by some of the good of all parties, of the worth of those principles which this work embodies, and that the signs of the times are pointing towards Methodism. When the present gladiators shall have fought their battles—when Ecclesiastico-political agitation shall have subsided—and when brotherly love shall

have taken the place of mutual alarm, we doubt not, that one of two events will occur—either important changes will be made in the Established Church, approaching to the principles here recognized, and in some measure neutralizing the evils of a State alliance, or a large secession of its most devoted Clergy will take place; while Dissenters will advance towards the ground which now lies between the two extremes. How important, then, are the existence and the living activity of a mediate body of Christians, as a sort of point to which all may direct their attention—or, at least, an asylum, to which the truly catholic may flee from the truly bigoted! Even before this happy agreement shall take place, in how many instances does the unfettered zeal of men, more intent on doing good itself, than on the mode in which it may be effected, fill up places which otherwise would be vacancies, and animate parts which otherwise would be torpid and lifeless!

The Writer of this Introduction judges it will not be deemed out of place for him to state what he conceives to be the principles of the Connexion founded by the late Countess of HUNTINGDON; this, however, it will be remembered, he does not officially, but as an individual member, and that the statements themselves more respect the *original* constitution and spirit of the Connexion, than the practice of any particular congregation at the present moment.

The spirit of Evangelical truth, then, in which the Connexion originated, is a proof that it was constitutionally formed for evangelical enterprise. These volumes cannot be attentively perused without the recognition of the fact, that the commencement and continuance of this class of Christian efforts was to make inroad on the world, and, so far as they needed it, to disturb the slumbers of pious men of all denominations. The plan of itinerating—the restless endeavour to break up new ground—the too great hurry with which the Countess sent her students from the College to labour in the public ministry—the true spirit of missions in which she lived and moved—her living zeal and dying requests and prayers—all show what *she* designed. And in proportion as those who have professed to follow her

steps—for she could have no successors—have worked the College and the Connexion as an apostolic* and enterprising association for the evangelization of mankind, they have redeemed the vows which were upon them.

So far from supposing the Connexion would become a mere trust for a certain number of chapels, each left to work in an insulated form, the Countess was indeed too negligent in effecting legal security of the places which she either entirely built or obtained at considerable expense. “WORK!” was her motto, and she contemplated in all she did an increased power and activity in a machine which should *operate* for the Divine glory and human salvation. O! that there were more of spirit in the wheels.

As far, therefore, as the Connexion fails to make enterprise, and ceases to be an active evangelizing body, so far does it abandon its own principles, and disappoint the righteous expectation of the universal Church.

Nothing, however, can be farther from the true spirit of the Connexion, than that of proselyting to a mere party. The Countess and her fellow-labourers were much above sectarian feeling; sometimes, indeed, their liberality to the general cause stands chargeable with injustice to themselves, as it led them to neglect that organization which is essential to the perpetuity of a cause. This will account for the numerous chapels, mentioned in these pages, raised under the influence of the Countess, and, in no small degree, at her expense, which have long since been detached from the Connexion, and some of the congregations of which will perhaps be startled at the discovery of their own origin and *obligations*.

Catholicity, then, is a leading characteristic of the Connexion—a spirit that hails every true Christian as a brother, and that views every unconverted man as the object of its benevolent zeal. This spirit, indeed, may not always have been preserved uninjured, but we maintain that Christian charity is the principle of Methodism, and that its great principle has been deserted exactly

* The Trustees of her Ladyship's College, at Cheshunt, are termed, in the deed, Trustees of “THE APOSTOLIC SOCIETY.”

in proportion to the degree in which it has been actuated by a sectarian and partial spirit. The Connexion, with all its faults, has, however, the pleasing consciousness of having blended more in all Christian efforts with other denominations than they have with her, and of having merged her name and identity in the general cause, more than have any of her cotemporaries.

The principle of accommodation has been adopted by the Connexion, and forms one of its characteristics. The Foundress was herself, at first, and ever continued to be, a friend to the National Church; she left its pale from circumstances, rather than from principle—a dissenter from its actual management, as unfriendly to the furtherance of the Gospel, more than from either its doctrines, its ritual, or the *theory* of its hierarchy—and, unless there were strong reasons to the contrary, always preferred the use of the Liturgy. Her early sentiments and habits were in conformity with these assertions, and, in later years, the communion she held with God, by means of the National Formularies, was not likely to wean her heart from them. She knew also that the great mass of the English population, however ignorant of the doctrinal Articles, were strongly predisposed towards the Prayers, and she therefore availed herself of this avenue to the public mind, and thus promulgated the all-important truths of the Gospel, without doing violence to Church prejudices. An accommodation was, in fact, all this while, perfectly natural, and free from any charge of trimming or dissimulation, as both she and her chaplains and other coadjutors only did that which they themselves preferred, though they knew at the same time that this line of conduct had public advantages. With most of them, it was more an act of self-denial to accommodate themselves to the Congregational form of worship; but, whether prayers were read or not, they rejoiced so that CHRIST was preached.

In carrying out this principle, the members of the Connexion believe they imitate the highest examples: the Apostles did it, with respect to the Jewish service, till the destruction of the holy city and the temple; and our LORD himself not only submitted to the Divine institutions, but, as in the frequent use of

the popular version and in other accommodations, to customs and practices, innocent indeed, but at the same time human.

The Gospel is a dispensation for *mankind*, and has in it wonderful elasticity, and Christian wisdom will endeavour to use this instrument as it comes from Him who knows what is in man, and what will suit his diversified constitution, both of mind and body. The water consolidated in ice, though cold and inert, will be most uniform in its appearance; but the Connexion delights to contemplate it in other and various forms—in the living stream, and in the dew and rain,—and, under good direction, in the moving and potent agency of vapour.

A writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1838, concludes an article, a great part of which we approve and admire, in the following way: “Whenever the time shall be ripe for writing the ecclesiastical history of the last and the present age, a curious chapter may be devoted to the rise and progress of the Evangelical body in England, from the days of WHITEFIELD to our own. It will convey many important lessons. It will manifest the irresistible power of the doctrines of the Reformation when proclaimed with honest zeal, even though its teachers be unskilled in those studies which are essential to a complete and comprehensive theology. It will show that infirmities which, not without some reason, offend the more cultivated, and disgust the more fastidious members of the Catholic Church among us, are but as small dust in the balance when weighed against the mighty energy of those cardinal truths, in the defence of which WYCLIFFE and LUTHER, KNOX and CALVIN, RIDLEY and LATIMER, lived, and laboured, and died. It may also prove that recondite learning, deep piety, and the purest virtue, may be all combined in bosoms which are yet contracted by narrow and unsuspected prejudices. But, above all, it may teach mutual charity; admonish men to look with kindness and self-distrust, even to each other’s extravagant claims to an exclusive knowledge of the Divine will, and the exclusive possession of the Divine favour.”

That you may form a just estimate of SELINA, COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON, the Writer would not only introduce you to pages which he hopes you will candidly and attentively read, but,

reminding you how much the present state of ever-growing piety and missionary exertion is indebted to her and her cotemporaries, would conduct you into the temple, extended in size and graced with spiritual adornments, and say—"LOOK AROUND."

J. K. FOSTER.

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OF THE

COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

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MR. HOWEL HARRIS, who had been with Lady Huntingdon at Brighton, now returned to London, where he was most kindly received by Lord Dartmouth, Lady Gertrude Hotham, Mrs. Carteret, and Mrs. Cavendish. At their houses he often expounded with successful ability, and after preaching several times at the Tabernacle and Tottenham-court Chapel, he visited Bath, and preached at Lady Huntingdon's chapel, expounding also at Lord Buchan's, and other houses. At her Ladyship's request he spoke to Messrs. Hart, Jones, Johnson, and Jesse, appointing them to meet her at Bath, in the month of May, when she purposed going thither with Mr. Whitefield to devise fresh schemes for the more extensive diffusion of Divine truth.

On the 30th of March Lady Huntingdon and Miss Orton left Brighton for London, where they remained only a few days, and thence proceeded to Bath. Mr. Venn had just set off for Yorkshire, having spent two months there supplying her Ladyship's chapel. By this means his sphere of action was

greatly enlarged, and the Lord gave many testimonies that his endeavours to be useful in his cause were acceptable and successful. His labours in Bath at this time were owned of God, and not a few were added to the society. In a letter to his esteemed friend and correspondent, James Kershaw,* Esq., of Halifax, he says:—

“I have been enabled to speak of our Jesus here, to the astonishment of the rich and noble. They have behaved with remarkable attention; and, by the numbers increasing, I trust the Lord will make himself known by this ‘foolishness of preaching,’ as he did of old.”

The duties of his parish having called him home, he was obliged to leave Bath before Lady Huntingdon’s arrival, and much earlier than he had intended. Mr. Venn, in his letter to her Ladyship, after his return to Huddersfield, says:—

“It was a real concern to me that I was under a necessity to leave Bath when I did; but my times and places of preaching on the way were so fixed, and at Easter so very much duty in preaching and surplice services, that my brother Ryland could not have gone through without me. You make me happy in telling me there is every appearance that the word of the Lord in my mouth was not in vain. All I can say is, that I teach that I do know, and testify that I have seen; that I feel the power and preciousness of the life and light of Immanuel; and, therefore, I would wish he was known by all who are ignorant of him, and very suspicious of his power and government.”

It was now that the Rev. Samuel Furley removed to Bath on account of his health. This good man was early connected with the Methodists. While at Cambridge he had formed an acquaintance with Mr. Venn, then Fellow of Queen’s College, and his senior by eight years. To him he recommended Law’s “Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life,” and Mr. Venn read it with peculiar interest and advantage, and immediately began to frame his life according to the Christian model there de-

* The members of a Socinian Club, in a market town near Huddersfield, sent two of their body to attend this strange preacher, to detect absurdity and furnish matter of merriment for the next meeting. They went; but were struck with the sight of the multitude assembled, the devotion of their behaviour, and their anxiety to attend the worship of God. When Mr. Venn ascended the reading-desk, he addressed his flock, as usual, with a solemnity and dignity which showed him to be deeply interested in the work in which he was engaged. The earnestness of his preaching, and his solemn appeals to the conscience, so deeply impressed one of the Socinian deputation, that he observed, as they left the church, “Surely God is in this place! there is no matter for laughter here!” He immediately called upon Mr. Venn, told him who he was, and the purpose for which he had come, and earnestly begged his forgiveness and his prayers. He requested Mr. Venn to visit him without delay, and left the Socinian congregation: and, from that time to the hour of his death, he became one of Mr. Venn’s most faithful and affectionate friends. This gentleman was James Kershaw, Esq., of Halifax.

lineated. After his ordination, Mr. Furley did duty a few months in London, occasionally assisting Mr. Romaine, and soon after removed to Lakenheath, in Suffolk. He continued there but a short time, and from that place went into Yorkshire, and resided at Kippax for twelve months. Whilst there Lady Huntingdon became acquainted with Mr. Furley, through the medium of her niece, Mrs. Medhurst. He afterwards removed to Slaythwait, where he remained five years, and preached to a large congregation, to many of whom his ministry was much blessed. There he received a visit from Lady Huntingdon, when she was with Lady Margaret Ingham at Aberford. In the year 1766, being in London, he was introduced by the Countess to the excellent Mr. Thornton, of Clapham, who presented him to the living of Roche, in Cornwall.

Mr. Furley seldom left his parish; but whenever he visited Bath he always rejoiced at being invited to preach in Lady Huntingdon's chapel. He was a faithful and zealous preacher of the everlasting Gospel; rather a Boanerges than a Barnabas,* and his learning and abilities made him an excellent explainer of the holy Scriptures. During the period he was at Bath for the benefit of his health and medical advice, Lady Huntingdon often visited him. "Dear Mr. Furley, (says Mr. Venn,) writes me word he had the pleasure of seeing your Ladyship at Miss Gideon's.† Your visits of love to that afflicted friend of mine, and child of God, I doubt not are a more reviving cordial to her soul than any medicine." Through the whole of her severe illness, Miss Gideon's cheerful resignation to the Divine will was wonderful to those who were eye and ear witnesses to the Christian fortitude and patience with which she bore the most excruciating pain. The conversation of Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Furley was peculiarly serviceable to her, and though she had to struggle with much feebleness and pain, occasionally attended his ministry at her Ladyship's chapel:—

"Not a complaining word (says the Countess) ever escapes her lips; but she is continually repeating that sweet passage of Scripture—*Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* Dear Mr. Furley prayed with her a few days ago, and administered the Lord's Supper at her house. Truly this child of God is in the furnace of affliction. May she come forth like gold from the refiner's fire."

Lady Huntingdon's stay in Bath was very short. On the 7th

* More a son of Thunder than a son of Consolation.

† Miss Gideon was one of that plenteous harvest that was gathered to the Lord in the drawing-rooms of Lady Huntingdon in London, under the powerful preaching of her chaplains. She was a daughter of Sampson Gideon, of

of April, accompanied by Miss Orton, she went to Trevecca, where she was joined by Mr. Fletcher, who waited on her for the purpose of escorting her to Madeley, whither she went on the 26th of April:—

“ I have just received your letter (writes Mr. Fletcher to Mr. Ireland) upon my arrival from Wales, with dear Lady Huntingdon, who is of a truth a *tried stone*, built upon the corner-stone; and such as you have seen her, such, I am persuaded, you will find her to the *last*, a soul devoted to Jesus, living by faith, going to Christ himself by the scriptures, instead of resting on the letter of the Gospel promises, as too many professors do.”

Soon after Lady Huntingdon's return from Trevecca, Mr. Whitefield arrived in Bath. It was during this visit that her Ladyship had another numerous meeting of ministers at her house.* The Rev. Richard Hart, rector of St. George's, Kingswood, Rev. James Brown, rector of Pentishead, and vicar of Kingston, Mr. Jones, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Roquet, rector of St. Werburgh's, Bristol, Mr. Howel Harris, Mr. Furley, and many others were present; all of whom expressed their stedfast de-

Belvidere-house, Kent, Esq., a man well known, and sister of Sampson, first Lord Eardley. At one period she resided at Clifton, but afterwards removed to Bath, where she enjoyed the society of those to whom her heart and affections were united. She was a woman of deep piety, and much esteemed by Lady Huntingdon, and those men of God who laboured for her. In the correspondence of Mr. Whitefield are to be found some letters addressed to Miss Gideon, and she is often mentioned in the letters of Mr. Romaine, Mr. Venn, and others.

* With a view to promote that cause which she valued more than life, Lady Huntingdon was accustomed, from time to time, for a number of years, to assemble the evangelical clergy in the vicinity of Bath, at her residence, to consult upon the most advisable plans to be adopted for the more general diffusion of divine truth in different parts of the kingdom, and in the immediate neighbourhood of their respective cures. As early as the year 1755 we find her thus actively engaged. In the month of January 1756, there was another meeting at her Ladyship's. Mr. Chapman, vicar of Bradford, Mr. Hart, then curate of Warminster, Mr. Johnston, perpetual curate of Cirencester, Mr. Brown, then curate of Bradford, and afterwards vicar of Kingston, Mr. Rawlings, vicar of Padstow, Mr. Hill, rector of Tavistock, and one or two others, composed this little band. On these occasions there was frequent preaching. Numerous audiences were collected; the sermons were listened to with the deepest attention, and her Ladyship received many testimonies of their usefulness. Her own spirit was always much refreshed by these meetings; and her clerical friends were accustomed to hail her arrival amongst them as a season of peculiar pleasure and advantage.

The Rev. William Rawlings, formerly of Exeter College, Oxford, and for forty years vicar of Padstow, was the intimate and bosom friend of Mr. Walker of Truro. His son, the present rector of Lansallos, espoused a niece of Lord de Dunstanville.

Mr. Hill was the particular friend of the Rev. George Thompson, vicar of St. Ginney's, in Cornwall, under whom he was awakened. He was a pious and exemplary minister, and possessed a good church living, which he knew how to apply to proper uses. He died about the year 1800, at an advanced age.

termination to brave every suffering and reproach for the Gospel's sake, persevere in the great cause in which they were engaged till every city had the standard of the cross erected in it, an every obscure village in the kingdom, by some means or other should hear the joyful sound !

A few days after this meeting, Lady Huntingdon, Lady Anne Erskine, Miss Orton, and Mr. Howel Harris, accompanied Mr. Whitefield into Gloucestershire on a preaching excursion. From thence her Ladyship proceeded through Wales to Derbyshire and Yorkshire. Thence she repaired to London, accompanied by Mr. Whitefield ; but her stay was short, as she proposed to spend the winter at Bath. Not long after her arrival there she received the afflicting intelligence of the death of her esteemed friend, Mrs. Venn. For the last few months of her life she was in a very declining state of health ; and when Lady Huntingdon was at Huddersfield she perceived strong symptoms of a rapid decline. Her spirits, which during her health had been remarkably lively, were now become equally low. This, with the weakness she felt, and the thought of her beloved husband's affliction if she should be taken from him, with many other fears, almost overwhelmed her.

The following particulars of Mrs. Venn's illness are extracted from a brief statement in Mr. Venn's own hand-writing. It is addressed to his dear and intimate friend, the late Sir Richard Hill, Bart., and soon after communicated to Lady Glenorchy, by her confidential friend and adviser, Miss Hill. A copy was also sent to Lady Huntingdon by Sir Richard, and was some years after published by her Ladyship's Chaplain, Mr. Wills, in his "Spiritual Register."

"On the 5th of September, when some alarming symptoms appeared, she told me, 'I am ready, I am willing to depart ; so clear a view have I had of my Saviour !' On Tuesday the 8th, when the fever raged, she laid her hand upon the head of her dear friend, Miss Hudson, saying, 'O that I could take you up with me to everlasting rest !' On Mr. Ryland asking her whether she could not still bless God, she answered, smiling, 'O ! now is the time for Him to bless me !' meaning her disease bore down the activity of her mind, and rendered her entirely passive to receive the comforts of his love. Two days before her departure she desired we would not pray for her recovery, but for some mitigation of her pain, and for an easy passage to the Lord. This request was fully answered : for though her pain increased, till she once said, 'I think it is greater than I can bear !' yet the very last words she uttered were—'Oh, the joy ! Oh, the delight !'

"I was in much pain (continues Mr. Venn) after I knew we must part, from the fear of what she might suffer in the agonies of death. But in the midst of judgment, upon me a sinful man, my God remem-

bered mercy : for she appeared insensible from six in the morning till a quarter past two in the afternoon, on the 11th of September, 1767 ; when, only drawing in her breath twice, somewhat longer than usual, her spirit took its flight, and left me suffering under an affliction which nothing but the presence and love of Jesus, and the clear evidence of her being with Him, could make supportable.”*

Mrs. Venn's remains were interred by torch-light, and Mr. Burnet, afterwards vicar of Elland, preached in the church during the service. Her afflicted husband was wonderfully supported, and enabled to preach her funeral sermon the next morning, being Sunday, to a very crowded and deeply affected congregation, from “ Let me die the death of the righteous ; and let my last end be like his ! ”

Nothing could exceed the kindness of Lady Huntingdon's nieces, Mrs. Medhurst and Miss Wheeler. They invited him and his children to Kippax, hoping to relieve his mind from the load of grief which seemed to press heavy upon him.†

Nor was Lady Huntingdon less solicitous for the welfare of the friend she so highly valued. Shortly after this distressing event, her Ladyship wrote to him, inviting him to spend some time with her at Bath. Mr. Venn's answer is worthy of preservation, not only because it exhibits the sensible supports which he enjoyed at this time, but likewise because it gives an interesting detail of the effect of his ministry at Huddersfield :—

“ Huddersfield, Oct. 15, 1767.

“ The only return I can make your Ladyship for the very tender sympathy you show for me in my present trial, is prayer to Him who has already made so much use of you as an instrument, that he would do so more and more. Six places I have been most cordially invited

* It is rather singular, that though much of the above narrative is inserted in the Life of Mr. Venn, lately published by his grandson, yet the names of Sir Richard Hill (to whom it was addressed) and Lady Glenorchy (from whose life it is taken) are studiously omitted. Strange that the descendant of this apostolic man should consider it a disgrace to be associated with such characters, particularly Sir Richard, who was his most intimate friend. Unfortunately this feeling pervades the work.

† His letters to these excellent women will be read with deep interest and profit. It is a curious fact, that although their names frequently occur in the Life and Correspondence of Mr. Venn, and many of his most valuable and interesting letters are addressed to them, yet the reader is left to conjecture who these favoured correspondents were. This is the more extraordinary, as there are frequent notices of his intimate friends and associates scattered through the work ; but not the slightest allusion to *their* being the nieces of the Countess of Huntingdon, as if their connexion with that incomparable character detracted from their real worth or sterling goodness, and degraded them in the estimation of Mr. Venn's biographer, who, in every possible way, is most assiduous to steer clear of the odour of Methodism. The worthy Venn had a soul superior to this species of trifling. He loved all who loved his Divine Master, of whatever name or denomination.

to ; but I know my soul would receive a blessing under your roof, as it has done again and again. I am now a living witness of the truth you so strenuously maintain, and of the necessity of that truth in our miserable condition here below. Did I not know the Lord to be mine ; were I not certain his heart feels even more love for me than I am able to conceive ; were not this evident to me, not by deduction and argument, but by consciousness, by his own light shining in my soul, as the sun's doth upon my bodily eyes, into what a deplorable situation should I have been now cast ! I have lost all that I could wish myself to have been, in the partner of my cares and joys, and lost her when her industry, and ingenuity, and tender love, and care of her children, were all just beginning to be perceived by the two eldest girls, and to strike them with a sense of the excellency of such qualities. I have lost her when her soul was as a watered garden, when her mouth was opened to speak for God, and he was blessing the testimony she bore to a free, full, and everlasting pardon in the blood of Jesus. Nevertheless, I can say, *all is well*. Hallelujah ! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. At all times, and in every thing pertaining to me, let him do what seemeth Him good. Were there no Holy Ghost now to strengthen me mightily ; were there nothing more than a dependance on the word of promise, without an Almighty power and agent to explain, impress, and apply it, how would my hands hang down, and my knees be so feeble that I should faint and fall under the pressure of my cross ! But on the contrary, I abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost given unto me. I rejoice in tribulation, from the experience I now have, more than I possibly could in a less severe trial, that the man of sorrows is as rivers of water in a dry place, and giveth songs in the night. My blessed Lord sent to me two preachers immediately after my loss. The one was a poor and most afflicted widow—sick, very sick in body, with two helpless children, destitute of raiment almost ; and upon my asking her how she did—‘ Oh, Sir ! since you have been gone, (she answered) I cannot tell you how much my Saviour has done for me. Though I have utterly lost the sight of one eye since you went, I have got better light than the sun can give me. I feel myself so sinful, and Him so full of love to me, that I am happy, and only beg of you that I may not be carried into the workhouse, to be amongst so many people, because I feel by being alone as I am, I can enjoy the love and presence of the Lord more abundantly. But, if you think it proper that I should go, I can go still in faith and cheerfulness.’ The weighty manner in which she spoke this, and the air of her countenance was, indeed, such as I think I never saw. It was as if she saw her Lord, and he was attending to every word that came out of her mouth. This was a sermon to my heart, and as seasonable as the rain upon the mown grass.

“ The other preacher was a double-minded professor, with whom I have often discoursed. She told me that now she would believe all I said of the love of God. ‘ Before, I used always to say of you, you had no trials. You might, indeed, give your advice to persons in trouble, but you knew nothing of their feelings. But since you have

lost Mrs. Venn, and can be thankful, I now confess you may call upon us, with much justice, to seek after God, and declare the knowledge of him to be indeed a help in every time of need.' So necessary do I now myself see it that ministers should be touched in the most sensible part, that knowing the hearts of God's people, and the comforts he imparts to them, we may be able to comfort them with the very same comforts wherewith we have been ourselves comforted of God.

"I have been enabled to remember your Ladyship in your sickness, and cannot but hope you will yet be spared, and many more seals be added to your labours of love before you rest above. I shall be much obliged for a letter, when health and leisure will permit. And, returning you my most heart-felt thanks for your prayers, your example, your invitation, and a thousand instances of kindness to such a sinful man, I remain your servant in the bonds of Jesus,

"H. VENN."

Mrs. Venn was a daughter of the Rev. Thomas Bishop, D.D., minister of the Tower church in Ipswich, a gentleman of high eminence as a scholar and a divine. In this lady Mr. Venn found a mind congenial with his own,—the most sincere and exalted piety, directed by a sound judgment, and enriched by a sweetness of disposition and animation which rendered her particularly interesting as a companion and friend. Lady Huntingdon's acquaintance commenced shortly after her marriage, when Mr. Venn was curate of Clapham. Between them was formed a friendship of the strictest kind, which continued till Mrs. Venn's death. In Mr. Venn's letter to Miss Wheeler, the following passage occurs relative to the supports which he experienced under his severe bereavement, and corroborative of the sentiment at the close of his letter to Lady Huntingdon:—

"Since the moment she left me, I can compare my sense of her being with the Lord to nothing but a vision ; it is so clear, so constant, so delightful ! At the same time the Lord gives me to see his own infinite beauty, and to feel more and more his preciousness, as a fountain of living waters, to those who are bereft of earthly joys. And well it is that I am so supported ! For his own cause, I cannot but conclude the Lord does it : since, immediately upon my unspeakable loss, the opposers cried out, ' Oh ! now you will see what will become of his vauntings of the power of faith and the name of Jesus ! ' They knew our great happiness, and they said, ' You will see your vicar just like any one of us in the same situation ! ' But my God heard and answered ; so that when I was mightily helped by Him to preach the very Sabbath after her death, and not many hours after her interment, their mouths were stopped, and the little flock of Jesus, who had been praying for me with all fervour and affection, say they have not had so great a blessing since I have been among them."

Several members of Sir Rowland Hill's family now began to

attract public notice from their open and avowed attachment to the cause of God and truth. Of Miss Hill, Lady Glenorchy had often spoken in terms of high commendation; and with Mr., afterwards so well known as Sir Richard Hill, Lady Huntingdon had long been acquainted. The report of Mr. Rowland Hill's piety and zeal soon reached the ears of her Ladyship, who eagerly sought his acquaintance. He was then a student at Cambridge, and had preached in many places with great acceptance and success. Not only were all the energies of his own mind at this period directed to the object of preaching Christ, but he had been the means also of communicating to some of his fellow-students and others a portion of his ardent zeal. They had formed a little society, of which he was the leader; and he urged them on in pursuit of the one end they had in view, through every possible barrier that was cast before them. He was assailed on all sides. His father and mother were decidedly opposed to his career, and his superiors in the University condemned, in the strongest terms, his infringements of discipline. Hints of a refusal of his testimonials, and even of his degree, were held out as the probable result of these irregularities; but in vain. To preach Christ he was resolved; and it was not his natural disposition to yield to any intimidating menaces, nor could he see that, by his present departure from the regulations of the University, he was throwing any obstacle in the way of his future usefulness. The stigmas and censures cast on him he considered as honours of the highest order; and expulsion, or refusal of any University privilege, would only have driven him at once to other scenes of labour, and not to desponding silence and obscure repose. Besides the inclination of his own zealous and fervent disposition, he was under the influence of a master spirit of no ordinary mould: he was encouraged in his course, whenever difficulties appeared before him, by the stirring letters of Mr. Whitefield.

Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Berridge, both of whom had considerable influence in directing his newly awakened mind, had repeatedly mentioned him to Lady Huntingdon. Mr. Hill's acute sensibility to the opposition of his parents, and the hindrances which were cast in the way of his exertions, seem very much to have weakened the spring of his elastic mind. The opposition he experienced at Cambridge now becoming very serious and decided, he wrote to consult Mr. Whitefield, whose advice, so much in unison with his own desires, was quite sufficient to determine him to defy all resistance from whatever quarter:—

“Go on, therefore, (says he) my dear man, go on; old Berridge, I

believe, would give you the same advice : you are honoured in sharing his reproach and name. God bless and direct and support you—he will, he will ! Good Lady Huntingdon is in town ; she will rejoice to hear that you are under the cross : you will not want her prayers, or the poor prayers of, my dear young honest friend, yours, &c. &c., in an all-conquering Jesus.”

Through the instrumentality of Mr. Whitefield it was at length determined that Mr. Hill should pay a visit to Lady Huntingdon, who was then at Bath. On the 21st of October he left Hawkstone for the University, having first commended to God in prayer those of whom he was now about to take leave. This is noticed in a letter of his sister to her friend, Lady Glenorchy, dated October 20, 1767, in which she says—

“ We have just had a parting prayer with my dear brother Rowland, who leaves us to-morrow. He proposes to see good Lady Huntingdon, in his way to Cambridge, which I trust will be blessed to him, and that he will ever stand faithful in the cause of his crucified Master, whether he be admitted as a minister of the Gospel to preach in his name or not ; but, alas ! my dear friend, to such a deplorable apostacy is the world come, that young men who are stedfastly attached to the Church, and live exemplary lives, can hardly get their testimonials signed for orders.”

On his arrival at Bath he was soon received by Lady Huntingdon, as she herself expresses it, “ with open arms.” He preached in her chapel, and expounded in her house, “ with much comfort.” He also preached at the residence of Mrs. Layton, a lady at that time very conspicuous in the religious circles at Bath, and who was the friend and correspondent of Mr. Beridge, Mr. Toplady, and others. There were a great number of persons of distinction, and Mr. Hill was “ rather dashed at the audience,” and observes, “ I do not love to speak to fine people.” As he was under the frowns of his family, and sometimes exposed to such treatment as called forth the interference of others, he felt fully sensible of the marked attentions of the Countess. Her Ladyship’s maternal kindness to him, in a season of distress and perplexity, proved the sincerity of the friendship she professed for her young friend :—

“ He was as my own son—received into my house, and preached in my pulpits. I have again written to Lady Hill in his behalf, my former application to Sir Rowland having met with no redress. But they obstinately refuse to answer any letter I write to entreat for him. There is no hope then from that quarter. But blessed be God, we *have* a strong-hold, a never-failing source of comfort and support to look to under every trial. That God whose he is, and whom he desires to serve, will uphold him, and carry him through all the storms of persecution, and all the opposition, rage, and malice of men and devils, and make him a triumphant conqueror over all. I have a confidence, a firm persuasion, that he will triumph ; for he is on the Lord’s side, and

Jesus, the King of Zion, will enable him to overcome every obstacle intended to retard the progress of his truth, in preventing his entrance into orders. If the Lord omnipotent will send, who shall stay his power? What arm of flesh shall resist the power of Jehovah? He has preached frequently, and great crowds attended at the chapel and at my house. His word fell with great power, and some were pierced to the heart. Dear Mr. Brown* was much delighted, and poured

* Mr. Brown, afterwards vicar of Kingston, and Mr. Furley, rector of Roche, were supplying her Ladyship's chapel at this period. Mr. Romaine was also preaching at Bath for Lady Huntingdon, and did not return to London till the middle of October. It was on this occasion that Mr. Hill and Mr. Brown met for the first time, when a friendship commenced which only ended when the latter was taken to his eternal reward. It should be remembered, that it was this good man who furnished Mr. Hill with his title to orders; and that Rowland preached his first sermon at his curacy at Kingston, on Sunday the 20th of June, 1773, from—"I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Mr. Brown was at that period minister of a large parish, situated in a delightful country in the neighbourhood of Taunton. He was an elegant scholar, and a warm-hearted and generous friend. His sentiments were refined by the sincerest piety, and his conversation was replete with true politeness, diversified and interesting. "He is, in many respects, (says Lady Huntingdon,) an extraordinary man. His classical knowledge, I am told, exceeds that of most men of his age and standing. His information is extensive, accurate, and correct. His knowledge diversified and profound. But what I admire most is his zeal and devotedness of heart to God. His preaching is much admired, and is owned by the great Master of assemblies. It is now about twelve years since he was called of God to the knowledge of his truth. My excellent friend, Mr. Joseph Williams of Kidderminster, was the honoured instrument of his conversion, the particulars of which are very interesting and extraordinary."

The mention of Joseph Williams induces us to extend this long note.—This devout tradesman was the son of a pious clothier, deacon of a dissenting church at Kidderminster. He very early became acquainted with the leaders of the Methodist connexion, by whom, as well as Lady Huntingdon, he was highly esteemed. His occasional labours in the Tabernacle connexion afforded Mr. Whitefield much satisfaction. Eminent for the exercise of personal religion, he was signally successful in diffusing piety among all whom Providence had placed within the sphere of his influence. In one of his numerous journeys, happening to visit his friend, Mr. Chapman, the vicar of Bradford, Wilts, he was introduced to Mr. Brown, the vicar's curate. Mr. Williams saluted him, and asked with an air of solemnity and confidence—*Sir, how does your soul prosper?* "This (says Mr. Williams) it pleased God to make the arrow of his conviction. He seemed a little disconcerted, and replied in a languid manner. I saw him no more that night. Next morning he sent for me just as I was going to take horse, and told me, that our conversation the preceding evening had given him a great deal of concern; that it had put him upon considering the state of his soul more than ever before. I talked with him a good while as the Lord enabled me, and then said—Come, do not let us part without prayer. Mr. Hart, a pious curate from Warmington, happened to come in, and they both desired me to pray, so we kneeled down all three together, and the Lord poured out the spirit of grace and supplications. When we rose, he appeared bathed in tears, thanked me most heartily, begged the continuance of my prayers, and that I would write to him." The impression proved permanent and effectual; Mr. Brown became a faithful preacher of the Gospel; and Mr. Williams, who lived but a few years after, maintained from that time an affectionate correspondence with him: delighted, as he said, with the honour of being a winner of such as are winners of souls.

forth fervent prayers on his behalf, at our parting prayer-meeting, before he set off for Cambridge."

Lady Huntingdon appears to have been much indisposed in the early part of the month of October, which is noticed by Mr. Venn at the close of his letter of the 15th, in which he hopes she "will yet be spared, and many more seals be added to her labours of love before she is removed to her rest above." Towards the middle of October her Ladyship's health appeared tolerably established; and on the 27th of that month, Mr. Romaine informs Mrs. Medhurst that "Lady Huntingdon was pure and well." This amendment, however, was but of short duration; for early in November she had a very serious relapse, was again most alarmingly indisposed, and for several weeks was visited with a lingering illness which totally incapacitated her from writing, or any active employment. The most serious apprehensions were entertained for her safety; and thousands of people offered up their joint supplications on her behalf, in the house of God. Little was seen, on this trying occasion, amongst her numerous friends at Bath, but affliction and tears. Indeed, it was a period much to be remembered for the many affecting testimonies which appeared on every side.

The melancholy tidings of her Ladyship's alarming indisposition quickly circulated through the kingdom, and excited grief the most unfeigned, and called forth prayer the most importunate on her behalf. Few felt more deeply on this occasion than her excellent friend, Mr. Venn:—

"Your Ladyship's letter, received this day, filled me with joy unspeakable. I was greatly afraid the Church of God below was going to lose you, and that your sickness was gaining ground, and left us little hopes of your longer continuance here. In your illness I could not but be concerned for the ark, and mentioned your chapels, and the unspeakable loss if they were not kept open. Lord Dartmouth said—*Should Lady Huntingdon leave them to me, I should think myself bound in conscience exactly to comply with her will.* I said nothing more upon that head, but thought it proper to acquaint you."

Messrs. Stillingfleet, Madan, and Talbot expressed the same concern for the unspeakable loss which the Church of Christ would sustain in the removal of this eminent woman. The latter speaks more fully of her Ladyship's chapels:—

"I have had a long conference (says Mr. Talbot) with my Lord Dartmouth, who is ready and willing to do any thing your Ladyship may direct. He feels his inability for a work so great, but humbly hopes the Lord will strengthen his hands, if you should think proper to repose the trust in him. He is delicate of writing, lest he should appear to dictate. Messrs. Madan, Stillingfleet, Romaine, and Downing

are of opinion that his Lordship is the fittest person for this great cause. How have we wrestled with God on your behalf! Prayer-meetings have been frequently held at his Lordship's house, and the most importunate supplications have been poured forth before the throne of the Great Shepherd and Head of his Church and people, to spare his heritage in this ungodly land, and raise your Ladyship up again to be a nursing-mother to the Church of Christ. *Spare thy people, O God! and spare thy servant, we beseech thee!* has been the perpetual cry of our hearts in this season of suspense and deepest anguish: and I trust our prayers will be heard for his great name's sake. To him we commit your Ladyship, and his cause and interest in the land with which you are so identified."

To the unspeakable joy of her numerous friends, Lady Huntingdon's disorder began rapidly to abate, and she was at length pronounced out of danger by her physicians. For some weeks, however, she was bowed down by a lingering weakness and depressed spirits. In this state of debility Mr. Whitefield found her Ladyship, on his arrival at Bath, early in the month of December, whence he wrote to Mr. Shirley, who had been preaching at Tottenham-court Chapel with great zeal and success for some considerable time previous to his return to Ireland:—

" Bath, December 8, 1767.

" Rev. and very dear Sir,—How glad was I to hear, by the ' London Shunamite,' that you and your lady were well;—that God had given you a son;*—that you reflected on your preaching at Tottenham-court Chapel with pleasure;—that you had gotten a curate;†—and, to complete all, that you intended to visit England next spring. This news rejoiced me before I left town, and was most grateful to our good Lady Huntingdon, whom I have the honour of waiting upon at this time in Bath. She has been sick, nigh unto death, but through mercy is now somewhat recovered, though as yet unable to write much. This her Ladyship much regrets on your account; and, therefore, enjoins me to inform your whole self that your letter did not reach her hands till many weeks after the proper time; that ever since she has been visited with lingering sickness, but begs you will not linger in coming over to our Macedonia to help us. The thought of it seems to refresh her heaven-born soul. Blessed be God, her Ladyship still takes the lead. She is now doing honour to the remains of the Earl of Buchan, who sweetly slept in Jesus last week. His corpse lies deposited in her chapel, and is not to be removed till next Friday morning. There have been public prayers and preaching twice every day. The noble relations constantly attend, and all is more than solemn.

* The present Rev. Walter Shirley, of Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

† Rev. Richard de Courcy, who was afterwards a preacher at Tottenham-court Chapel, and in Lady Huntingdon's connexion, chaplain to Lady Glenorchy, and finally vicar of St. Alkmond's, Shrewsbury.

Great numbers of all ranks crowd to see and hear : I trust many will also feel. The deceased Earl died like the patriarch Jacob ; he laid his hands on and blessed his children, assuring them of his personal interest in Jesus, calling most gloriously on the Holy Ghost, cried—*Happy! happy!* as long as he could speak, and then—you know what followed. I know you and yours will improve this imperfect account, and therefore hasten to subscribe myself, dear and honoured friend, yours, &c. &c.,

“ GEORGE WHITEFIELD.”

A short time previous to the opening of Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath, the Earl of Buchan, for his family convenience, had removed to that city. His Lordship succeeded his father, David, ninth earl, in 1745, and was brother to Lady Frances Gardiner, widow of that brave soldier and eminently pious Christian, Colonel James Gardiner, who was killed at the battle of Preston, in 1745, valiantly fighting against the rebels. Henry David, tenth Earl of Buchan, married Agnes, second daughter of Sir James Stewart,* of Goodtrees, in the county of Edinburgh, Bart. Her Ladyship was a woman of elegant taste and genius, and became mother of a numerous family; some of whom inherited her abilities—the strong natural parts and probity of the father, with the taste and brilliant imagination of the mother. For some considerable time Lord Buchan had been in a declining state of health, but at length his disorder assumed an appearance so formidable as to baffle the skill of the physicians, and medical aid was of no avail. The circumstances attending his death were of a nature highly consolatory to his afflicted family. His Lordship's long intimacy with persons of piety in Scotland had gradually prepared his mind for the reception of those great and momentous truths with which he became acquainted after his introduction to Lady Huntingdon and the junior members of the Hawkstone family. At her Ladyship's chapel, where he was a most regular attendant as long as his health permitted, he was in the constant habit of hearing Messrs. Whitefield, Wesley, Romaine, Venn, Shirley, Townsend, Fletcher, and others, men of renown in their day, whose powerful and energetic exhibitions of the doctrines of the Cross

* Sir James Stewart was Solicitor-General for Scotland. He married Anne, daughter of Sir Hugh Dalrymple, Lord President of the Court of Session, and left issue four daughters, and the late learned and truly eminent Sir James Stewart Denham, Bart., author of the ‘Principles of Political Economy.’ Miss Agnes Stewart, the second daughter, became the Countess of Buchan. Lady Anne Agnes Erskine was called after her grandmother and mother. Mary Anne Stewart, eldest daughter of Sir James Stewart, and sister of Lady Buchan, married Sir Alexander Murray, of Cringalty, in Peebleshire, Bart., and left issue two sons and a daughter. Lord Chancellor Erskine is reported to have said that he considered it the highest honour reflected on him and his family that Lady Anne Erskine was his sister.

proved most beneficial to the illumination of his Lordship's mind. A few days before his death, Lady Huntingdon went to see him, at his particular request. The interview was particularly affecting. As soon as he could speak, he said, "I have no foundation of hope whatever, but in the sacrifice of the Son of God—I have no where else to look—nothing else to depend upon for eternal life and salvation, and my confidence in HIM *is as firm as a rock.*"

In his last moments Lord Buchan bore witness of a hope and confidence of eternal life, built on the Divine propitiation and righteousness. As his end approached he evinced the same firm reliance on the hopes of the Gospel, and was filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. He behaved like the patriarch Jacob, when, by faith, leaning upon his staff, he blessed his children. The Earl added, "Yea, and they shall be blessed." At another time he said, "Had I strength of body, I would not be ashamed, before men and angels, to tell what the Lord Jesus hath done for my soul. Come, Holy Ghost! Come, Holy Ghost!—Happy, happy, happy!" Thus

———"On his lips, his dying lips,
The sound of glory quiver'd!"

and in this triumphant manner his Lordship burst the fetters of mortality, and entered that "land of pure delight"—

"Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end."

"His Lordship's departure (says Lady Huntingdon) was not only happy, but triumphant and glorious. Though arrived at the very summit of assurance, and experiencing much of those rapturous communications which are often made at the last moments to the souls of departing saints, he felt abased in the dust on account of his own vileness and utter wretchedness, and his continual cry was—God me merciful to me a sinner! I have witnessed the dismissal of many from the burden of mortality, but I have seldom seen an end more satisfactory, more solidly happy, or more triumphant. Thanks, unceasing thanks to Him who hath, in his infinite goodness, blessed the preaching of his word in the house which he hath enabled me to build to record the glories of his name, and the wonders of his redemption—and attended the labours of his vile and unprofitable servant with the benediction of his spirit! Not unto me, not unto me, O my God!—but unto THEE, and to thy free and sovereign grace, be all the praise and glory!"

His Lordship departed this life December 1st, 1767, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. The impressive services which took place at Bath on the death of the Earl, and which produced so great a sensation, were of a nature too singular and

interesting not to be noticed in this place. We shall give the narrative in Mr. Whitefield's words:—

“ All hath been awful, and more than awful. On Saturday evening, before the corpse was taken from Buchan House, a word of exhortation was given, and a hymn sung in the room where the corpse lay. The young Earl stood with his hand on the head of the coffin; the Countess Dowager on his right hand, Lady Anne and Lady Isabella* on his left, and their brother Thomas† next to their mother, with Miss Orton, Miss Wheeler, and Miss Goddle on one side; all the domestics, with a few friends, on the other. The word of exhortation was received with great solemnity, and most wept under the parting prayer. At ten the corpse was removed to good Lady Huntingdon's chapel, where it was deposited within a place railed in for that purpose, covered with black baize, and the usual funeral concomitants, except escutcheons. On Sunday morning all attended in mourning at early sacrament. They were seated by themselves at the foot of the corpse, and, with their head servants, received first, and a particular address was made to them. Immediately after receiving, these verses were sung for them:—

“ Our lives, our blood, we here present,
If for thy truths they may be spent;
Fulfil thy sovereign counsel, Lord—
Thy will be done, thy name adored,

“ Give them thy strength, O God of power!
And then let men and devils roar;
Thy faithful witnesses they'll be;
'Tis fixed—they can do all through thee.

“ Then they received this blessing:—‘ The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you! the Lord cause his face to shine upon you, and give you peace;’—and so returned to their places. Sacrament ended (and a blessed sacrament it was), the noble mourners returned to good Lady Huntingdon's house, which was lent them for the day. At eleven, public service began. The bereaved relations sat in order within, and the domestics around the outside of the rail. The chapel was more than crowded; near *three hundred tickets*, signed by the present Earl, were given out to the nobility and gentry to be admitted. All was hushed and solemn. Proper hymns were sung; and I preached on these words—‘ I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.’ Attention sat on every face, and deep and almost universal impressions were made. The like scene, and if possible more solemn, was exhibited in the evening; and I was enabled to

* Lady Isabella Erskine married, first, at Tunbridge Wells, 21st of January, 1770, William Leslie Hamilton, Esq., barrister at law, Attorney-General of the Leeward Islands, and a member of the Council of Barbadoes, who died in London, 2nd of October, 1780. Her Ladyship was married, secondly, 23d of April, 1785, to John, last Earl of Glencairne, and died at Boulogne-Sur-Mer, in France, May 17th, 1824, without issue by either of her husbands.

† Afterwards ennobled as Baron Erskine, of Restormed Castle, in Cornwall, and Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain.

preach a second time, and a like power attended the word as in the morning. Ever since there hath been public service and preaching twice a day. This is to be continued till Friday morning; then all is to be removed to Bristol, in order to be shipped for Scotland. The inscription on the coffin runs thus:—

HIS LIFE WAS HONOURABLE,
HIS DEATH BLESSED;
HE SOUGHT EARNESTLY PEACE WITH GOD;—
HE FOUND IT,
WITH UNSPEAKABLE JOY,
ALONE IN THE MERITS OF CHRIST JESUS,
WITNESSED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO HIS SOUL.
HE YET SPEAKETH:
“GO THOU AND DO LIKEWISE.”

“For five days together we have been attending at the house of mourning. Many, I trust, are obliged to say, ‘How dreadful is this place!’ Such a like scene I never expect to see opened again on this side eternity. Congregations very large, attentive, and deeply impressed. Surely the death of this noble Earl, thus improved, will prove the life of many. He had great foretastes of heaven; he cried, ‘Come, Holy Ghost!’ He came, and filled him with joy unspeakable. ‘Happy, happy!’ were his last dying words. All surviving relations still feel the influence: they sit round the corpse, attended by their domestics and supporters, twice a day. Two sermons every day—life and power attend the word; and I verily believe many dead souls have been made to hear the voice of the Son of God.”

The young Earl of Buchan now became very conspicuous in the ranks of Methodism. He made a bold avowal of his faith, and was zealous and constant in his attachment to the cause of God and truth. Shortly after the remains of the late Earl were shipped at Bristol for Scotland, the young Earl repaired to London, where he was soon thrown into the society of Lord and Lady Dartmouth, Lady Gertrude Hotham, Lady Chesterfield, Mrs. Carteret and Mrs. Cavendish, Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Madan, and a numerous circle of religious people.

“The present noble Earl, I believe (says Mr. Whitefield, when writing to Dr. Gillies,* of Glasgow), hath got the blessing indeed, and seems, upon the best evidence, to determine to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. He hath behaved in the most delicate manner to the Countess and other noble survivors. He stands here in town against all opposition, like an impregnable rock, and I humbly hope will prove the Daniel of the age. He must be—nay, he hath been already, thrown into a den of lions; but he hath One with him that stops the lions’ mouths. You will encourage all God’s people to pray for him. What, if you wrote him a line? I am sure it will be taken kindly; for I know he honours and loves you much.”

* Dr. John Gillies was for more than fifty years one of the ministers in the College Church of Glasgow. He married a daughter of the house of Stewart.

Succeeding to the hereditary honours and estates of his family, the young Earl of Buchan from that moment evinced a generous ambition to maintain and exalt, by his personal exertions, the true dignity of the Scottish peerage and the name of *Erskine*. If the law of freedom and the love of literature—if eminent proficiency in the fine arts, and an eager fondness to patronize the same proficiency in others—if classical and patriotic enthusiasm, associated with not a few of the most amiable and respectable moral virtues, are calculated to recommend any man to the esteem and praise of his contemporaries, David, Earl of Buchan, could not easily fail of obtaining their highest approbation. He made a public avowal of his principles, which drew upon him the laugh and lash of all the wits and witlings of the rooms; but he “stood impregnable as a rock,” defied all the sneers of the court, and dared “to be singularly good.” Regardless of the obloquy and reproach so liberally heaped upon him by his former companions and associates, he openly espoused the cause of God and truth; and, acting under the advice of Lady Huntingdon, appointed Mr. Venn, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Berridge as his chaplains:—

“I was filled with joy unspeakable (says Mr. Venn, when writing to Lady Huntingdon), for the glad tidings your letter brought of the Earl’s triumphant death, and the work of God at Bath. It is only a post since, that I received the compliment of a chaplainship to the Earl of Buchan. Though I feel not the least degree of value for any honour that cometh from man, yet this pleases me very much, because I can receive it in no other light than that of bearing a public testimony that Jesus, the God of the Christians, is his God and his all.”

His Lordship’s letter to Mr. Fletcher was highly gratifying to the feelings of that good man. In writing to Lady Huntingdon, Mr. Fletcher says:—

“I have just received a letter from Lord Buchan, where, among other edifying expressions, I find these pious lines—‘Pray for me, that I also may be found faithful when our Master calls for me, and that I may live a martyr to redeeming love, and die a trophy and a monument of the reality of the despised influences of the Holy Ghost.’ It is a singular honour to belong to so excellent a nobleman. Oh! how far below his grace is his nobility! I feel a strong desire to pray that he may be kept from the fickleness of youth and the baits of

Mrs. Gillies was a daughter of Sir John Stewart, one of the Commissioners for the county of Renfrew to the Union Parliament, and twin sister of the late Sir Michael Stewart, Member of the Faculty of Advocates. His grandson is the present Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, whose eldest daughter became Duchess of Somerset in 1836. Dr. Gillies was the biographer of Mr. Whitefield, and was an amiable and exemplary minister of Christ. He died March 29th, 1796, in the 84th year of his age. His only daughter married the Hon. Colonel Leslie, second son of the Earl of Leven.

ambition. I share in the happiness of Lady Buchan and Lady Anne Erskine upon the occasion. May God make them, together with your Ladyship, a four-fold cord to draw sinners unto Jesus!"*

After the remains of Lord Buchan were removed from Bath, Mr. Whitefield repaired to Bristol, where he preached thrice and administered the sacrament. The word was attended with great power, and thousands went away, being unable to get in. Having to preach at Bath a few times, he returned thither on the 16th of December. The funeral services for the late Earl had made a wonderful sensation in Bath, and brought vast numbers of the nobility to attend his ministry, so that the seed of Divine truth was sown in many a heart. Previous to his departure for London, Lady Huntingdon, anxious to have some popular supply for the chapel at that particular season, wrote to Mr. Venn in very urgent terms, hoping he would find it convenient to leave Yorkshire for a few weeks:—

"I was so much affected (writes Mr. Venn) with your Ladyship's letter, that I believe, though it is highly inconvenient, I should have set out for Bath if Mr. Powley had not consented. He was in the room when your letter came; and, upon receiving another from you, fixing Mr. Davies's time of being here, he will set out any day after Monday the 2d of January, to stay a month. He is a very precious minister, and in his last illness, I believe, received the knowledge of the Lord as his God."

At the same time that her Ladyship wrote to Mr. Venn, she sent a similar invitation to Mr. Berridge, requesting him to supply her chapel at Bath. His reply is dated—

"Everton, December 26, 1767.

"My Lady,—I had a letter from your Ladyship last Saturday, and another from Lord Buchan. His letter required an immediate answer, which I sent on Monday, and then went out a-preaching. I am now returned, and sit down to answer yours. But what must I say? Verily, you are a good piper; but I know not how to dance. I love your scorpion letters dearly, though they rake the flesh off my bones; and I believe your eyes are better than my own, but I cannot yet read with your glasses. I do know that I want quickening every day, but I do not see that I want a journey to Bath. I have been whipped pretty severely for fighting out of my proper regiment, and for rambling

* The Earl was twenty-four years of age at the period of his father's decease. His Lordship passed his life in literary retirement, and is known as the author of "An Essay on the Lives of Thompson the poet, and Fletcher of Saltoun." He died at an advanced age in 1829, without issue by his Countess, whom he survived ten years. His Lordship's mother, the Dowager-Countess of Buchan, was a woman deservedly esteemed for her good sense, fine abilities, amiable manners, and distinguished piety. She was a mathematician, and a scholar of the great Maclaurin. This accomplished lady died at Edinburgh on the 17th of December, 1778.

out of the bounds of my rambles ; and whilst the smart of the rod remains upon my back, it will weigh more with me than a thousand arguments. All marching officers are not general officers ; and every one should search out the extent of his commission. A Gospel minister, who has a church, will have a diocese annexed to it, and is only (*ἐπισκοπος*) an overseer or bishop of that diocese : and let him, like faithful Grimshaw, look well to it. An Evangelist, who has no church, is a Metropolitan or Cosmopolitan, and may ramble all the kingdom, or all the world over ; and these are more highly honoured than the other, though they are not always duly sensible of the honour. They are nearest to the apostolical character of any.

“ But whom do you recommend to the care of my church ? Is it not one Onesimus who ran away from Philemon ? If the dean of Tottenham could not hold him in with a curb, how should the vicar of Everton guide him with a snaffle ? I do not want a helper merely to stand up in my pulpit, but to ride round my district. And I fear my weekly circuits would not suit a London or a Bath divine, nor any tender Evangelist that is environed with prunello. Long rides and miry roads in sharp weather ! Cold houses to sit in with very moderate fuel, and three or four children roaring or rocking about you ! Coarse food and meagre liquor ; lumpy beds to lie on, and too short for the feet ; stiff blankets, like boards, for a covering ; and live cattle in plenty to feed upon you ! Rise at five in the morning to preach ; at seven breakfast on tea that smells very sickly ; at eight mount a horse with boots never cleaned, and then ride home, praising God for all mercies. Sure I must stay till your academy is completed, before I can have an assistant.

“ But enough of these matters. Let us now talk of Jesus, whom I treat in my letters, as I deal with in my heart, crowd him into a corner, when the first place and the whole room belongeth of right to himself. He has been whispering of late, that I cannot keep myself nor the flock committed to me ; but has not hinted a word as yet, that I do wrong in keeping close to my fold. And my instructions, you know, must come from the Lamb, not from the Lamb’s wife, though she is a tight woman. He has taught me to labour for him more cheerfully, and to loath myself more heartily, than I could before. I see myself nothing, and feel myself vile, and hide my head, ashamed of all my sorry services. I want his fountain every day, his intercession every moment : and would not give a groat for the broadest fig-leaves or the brightest human rags to cover me. A robe I must have of one whole piece, broad as the law, spotless as the light, and richer than an angel ever wore—the robe of Jesus. And when the elder brother’s raiment is put on me, good Isaac will receive and bless the lying varlet Jacob.”

During this period Lady Huntingdon’s constitution manifested symptoms of increasing weakness ; and at the commencement of the year 1768 she experienced an almost total loss of appetite. Although every aid of medicine was tried, administered by the hands of the most able physicians, who had long attended her,

yet her usual health could not be restored. He, who cannot err, saw meet to afflict her also at this time with many outward trials and disappointments, which had a natural tendency to lower the spirits; but those she bore with a holy fortitude, knowing that they were permitted for wise purposes, and, through grace, answer valuable ends. But however afflicted or tried, in great condescension, the Spirit of the living God bore witness with her spirit, that through the Son of his love, he was reconciled to her, and that her sins were forgiven. And although she felt the pressure of several trials and disappointments for a long time, she was graciously permitted to cast her burden on the Lord, who, in great mercy, gave her an increase of power to trust in him.

In a letter to Mr. Fletcher, at this time, her Ladyship expresses her sense of the goodness of the Lord, and the abundant support which she experienced whilst under his afflicting hand:—

“How many and sore trials hast thou showed me, yet in the midst of them thy comforts have refreshed my soul. Truly thou art

—— “the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights;
The glory of my brightest days,
And comfort of my nights.’

I feel perfectly resigned to suffer all my God shall think fit to lay upon me; for I am forcibly persuaded he will give strength according to my day, and fully perfect what concerns me. When ready to be discouraged by outward and inward trials, he always appears for my support. Never did I feel so much reconciled to the cross, when *it ceaseth* to be *necessary*, I shall suffer no more. O, what cause have I to trust in him for all things, when he has so clearly revealed his dear Son in me; and in my moments of secret anguish never permits me to lose sight of a reconciled God, or of my union with the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Her Ladyship’s chapel was supplied at the commencement of the year by the Rev. Matthew Powley, vicar of Dewsbury, near Wakefield, in Yorkshire; a man of superior talents and distinguished piety. He had been mentioned to her Ladyship in terms of approbation by Mr. Venn and Mr. Berridge, both of whom esteemed him very highly for his indefatigable diligence and zeal in the service of the Church of Christ. This was Mr. Powley’s first introduction to the congregation at Bath; and it was highly encouraging to him to learn, on his return to Yorkshire, that the Lord of the harvest had crowned his labours with success. In a letter from her Ladyship to Mr. Venn, acknowledging her obligations to him for having recommended one so able and faithful, she adds—

“Mr. Powley took his leave on Sunday in the words of the Apostle—

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. It was one of the most solemn and affecting meetings of this nature I ever remember to have attended. The Lord was remarkably present, and the whole congregation seemed to bow beneath the power of the Spirit. The unction of the Holy One rested in a very peculiar manner upon his labours here. I have heard of two persons awakened by his energetic appeals to the conscience, and trust very many spiritual children from this place will be his joy and the crown of his rejoicing in the day of the Lord.*

CHAPTER XXIX.

Death of the Hon. John Shirley and Lady Stewarta—Letters from Mr. Venn—Mr. Ryland Booth's "Reign of Grace"—Letter from Mr. Venn—Mr. Whitefield to Mr. Shirley—Mr. Whitefield's last visit to Bath—His labours in Lady Huntingdon's Chapel—Letters from Mr. Venn—Lord and Lady Dartmouth, George the Third, and Dr. Beattie—Baron Smythe—Lady Smythe—Mr. Moses Browne—Mr. Newton—Mr. Venn's preaching tours—Worcester—Mr. and Mrs. Stillingfleet—Shropshire—Mr. Henshaw and Mr. Hawksworth—Mr. Townsend—Mr. Jesse—Letter from Mr. Venn—Lady Lowther—Mr. Venn's sermon on the death of Mr. Whitefield—Mr. Venn's liberality.

AT the commencement of this year Lady Huntingdon was called to the painful task of parting with two very near and beloved relatives, the Hon. John Shirley, brother to Washington, Earl Ferrers, and her Ladyship's aunt, the Lady Stewarta Shirley, sister to Lady Fanny Shirley, Lady Selina Bathurst, Lady Mary Tryon, Lady Anne Furness, Lady Elizabeth Clarges, and Lady Dorothy Cotes. Lady Stewarta died at Bath, and for a series of years had been the subject of affliction. Her dismissal from mortality is thus briefly noticed by the Countess of Huntingdon:—

"Since I wrote last, I have been called to pass through additional trials, and have much cause to bless the Lord for the abundant supports which I experienced when in the furnace. Poor Lady Stewarta is at length released. But, oh! much mercy has been mixed with this painful dispensation. Dear Lady Fanny feels the parting stroke, but

* This faithful and useful minister of Christ was *twenty-nine* years vicar of Dewsbury. He departed to his eternal home on the 23rd of December, 1806; and the Gospel which he had embraced, and which he had for so many years published among dying men, was found by himself to be an effectual solace in the extremities of sickness and death.

has been enabled to manifest Christian fortitude and patience. Lady Barbara will not long survive; she is daily declining more and more.* O that we may have grace given us to be faithful to the interests of her immortal soul."

Lady Huntingdon's health having rapidly improved, and business of importance requiring her presence in the metropolis, she went thither the latter part of the month of March:—

"Through abounding mercy (says her Ladyship) I reached London on Wednesday last, with my health better than when I went from hence. I was rejoiced to meet my dear and honoured friend, Mr. Whitefield, once more in the flesh. He breakfasted with me the next morning, and I enjoyed a truly delightful season. Christian conversation was profitable, and social prayer sweet."

Her Ladyship remained in London till the beginning of May, when she went to Tunbridge Wells, where she was busily engaged in making preparations for the opening of her college at Trevecca, which was to take place in the month of August. Whilst at Tunbridge Wells her Ladyship wrote to Mr. Venn, then in a bad state of health, inviting him to her house at Bath, hoping that rest and the use of the waters might, under Providence, be the means of his complete restoration.

"Your Ladyship's last favour (says Mr. Venn) brought with power to my mind that ample promise made to the followers of the Lamb, that they should receive an hundred fold now in this time—houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers—for the poor sacrifice they can make in faithfulness to him; for certainly the parental affection dictated every syllable of your letter, and heartily am I obliged to you for it. Had I not a very afflicting call at home, I know the journey, the rest from my necessary duty, and perhaps the waters, would be of singular service to me, as I am sure your Ladyship's example and words would animate my soul; but I have a little child, who is very far gone in a consumption, after the small-pox; and though it humbles me very much to see her suffering day by day, yet the little alleviation I can administer, and the being an eye-witness that every thing is done for her which her case requires, gives me some comfort, and I look upon it as a call."

The delicate state of Mr. Ryland's health also prevented Mr. Venn's leaving home at this time. He had been invited to Kippax by Mrs. Medhurst, and had actually ridden eight miles on his way thither, when he turned back from a consideration which then first darted into his mind, that the weight of the whole duty lying on Mr. Ryland, it might bring on a relapse of his very alarming attack:—

"Immediately (says he) the uneasiness I felt, and the self-condemna-

* Her Ladyship died November 7, 1768, unmarried.

tion I should suffer, and the appearance it might have of unkindness in leaving him too soon alone, all crowded into my mind, and I could no way be satisfied but by being with him. I determined, therefore, God willing, to postpone my visit to you a little longer, when absence from home, on a Sabbath day, will in no degree endanger the health of one so justly dear to the parish and to myself, both for indefatigable labour and most truly Christian example."

Lady Huntingdon, at this time, had some prospect of obtaining the living of Ashby-de-la-Zouch for Mr. Ryland, of whom she entertained a very high opinion, from personal observations when in Yorkshire, as well as from the great estimation in which he was always held by Mr. Venn. After his marriage with Miss Hudson, one of Mr. Venn's most valued and faithful friends and correspondents, he continued to reside in the vicarage, as he had been accustomed to do before his marriage. By this arrangement, Mr. Venn's young family received the benefit of a most affectionate superintendence, which repaired, as far as possible, their mother's loss. The prospect of Mr. Ryland's removal gave Mr. Venn some uneasiness:—

"Shall I tell your Ladyship (says he) how much you are likely to distress me and my people by removing Mr. Ryland: he has been both strength of body and zeal of mind to supply my lack of service to a very large flock. He is greatly beloved, and greatly blessed in his indefatigable labours: and to my children he behaves with the tenderest love; so that, upon the proposal of calling him to Ashby, I found my heart rise, and unwilling for the time to say—'Let the will of the Lord be done.'"

About this period the late Rev. Abraham Booth attracted the notice of some persons eminent in the religious world. He was pastor of a small congregation of the Particular Baptist denomination, at Sutton Ashfield, in Nottinghamshire, where he composed a work entitled, "The Reign of Grace," which contained the substance of a great number of his sermons, preached first to the church over which he presided, and at other places. The manuscript had been recommended to Mr. Venn, who, hearing a pleasing account of Mr. Booth's life and ministry, desired to peruse it, "though he entertained no raised expectations concerning it;" but "to my great surprise (says Mr. Venn) there appeared to me in it the marks of a genius joined with the feelings of a Christian heart; a vigour of style much above what is common in our best religious writers; in his reasoning, clearness and force, and in his doctrine an apostolic purity***. I flatter myself also that this work will prove both so pleasing and useful to men of an evangelical taste, that some better situation may be found for Mr. Booth—a situation proper for a man

whom God hath endowed with abilities, and a taste for good learning; so that he shall be no more subject to the necessity of manual labour."

By the advice of Mr. Venn, Mr. Booth's treatise was committed to the press, which, with his recommendation and the merits of the work itself, soon brought the worthy author into notice:—

"I have just been the means (continues Mr. Venn) of publishing a work which, all things considered, your Ladyship will doubtless think a very extraordinary one. The author is very poor, has seven children, and was never taught more than to read or write. The title of the book is 'The Reign of Grace, from its Rise to its Consummation.' Some things there are in it which I am sure would exceedingly delight you; and from the rage with which they rail against me at Halifax, for causing it to be published, I trust the old serpent feels it strike at his throne.

"I have the pleasure of acquainting your Ladyship that another is just gone to heighten the triumph above from Thornhill. She was of that amiable, meek spirit, which is ever highly esteemed in the world. She was named always as an example. Five years ago she paid a visit to a bitter opposer of the Gospel in my parish, and then the Lord called her; and so precious was his name to her heart, and so jealous was she of his glory, that a few weeks before her death one of her old acquaintance mentioning that so good a liver as she had been must be happy after death, threw her into a fit. Indeed, Messrs. Burnet, Ryland, Stillingfleet, Molesworth, and myself, were all very much edified by her. The furnace of affliction into which she was cast was exceedingly hot. For seven weeks she endured such pains as made us rejoice when her Lord and Heavenly Husband said, *it is enough*; and then departed with a smile.

"I beg my Christian respects to Lady Anne, to Miss Orton, and all friends. I wish you good luck in the name of the Lord. May the fruit of the cross amongst you shake like Libanus. From your very greatly indebted servant for Christ's sake,

"H. VENN."

As soon as Mr. Booth's work was in circulation, Lady Huntingdon procured a number of copies, which she distributed in every direction, and recommended the author to several of her dissenting friends of the Baptist denomination in London. Her Ladyship wrote to Dr. Gifford, and sent him several copies of "The Reign of Grace," requesting him to use his utmost efforts in promoting the welfare of the deserving author. Some of the members of the church in Prescot-street, Goodman's-fields, (then destitute of a pastor,) having read the book, and being much pleased with it, invited Mr. Booth to preach to them on trial. He afterwards received a unanimous call, and was ordained pastor of the church on Feb. 16th, 1769. Lady Hunting-

don, being at that time in London, was present on the interesting occasion, and ever after maintained a friendly intercourse with Mr. Booth.

At the commencement of the year Lady Huntingdon appears to have been much indisposed. She had spent a portion of the winter in London, but was sufficiently recovered, soon after Mr. Booth's ordination, to proceed to Bath, where she remained some weeks for the benefit of the waters, before she proceeded on her intended excursion into Kent and Sussex. A few weeks previous to the departure of her Ladyship for Bath, Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley left London for Bristol, and at the request of the Countess took Bath in their way. On Thursday evening, the 7th of March, Mr. Charles Wesley read prayers, and his brother preached in the chapel to a very numerous and attentive congregation. On Mr. Wesley's departure for Ireland, Mr. Charles Wesley remained for some time to supply the chapel. Shortly after her Ladyship's arrival she was joined by Mr. Shrubsole, of Sheerness, whose labours in the Tabernacle connexion are well known. He resided with her Ladyship about three weeks, and frequently preached in the chapel with much acceptance and success. Lady Fanny Shirley, also, about the same period, removed to that city, for the benefit of her health, and continued there till her death.

Owing to his incessant labours, Mr. Whitefield was seriously indisposed at this period; but towards the end of March, so far recovered as to be able occasionally to resume his delightful occupation. "Through infinite mercy (writes Mr. Whitefield) I have been enabled to preach four days successively." During his illness he received repeated offers of assistance from several of his brethren in the ministry, but from none more cordially than from the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley. In a letter, dated London, April 1, 1769, Mr. Whitefield thus expresses his obligations to Mr. Shirley for his proffered assistance:—

"Rev. and very dear Sir,—How much am I obliged to you for your two kind letters, and more especially for the repeated offers of your ministerial assistance. They will be most gratefully accepted, and, I humbly hope, be remarkably succeeded by Him who hath promised to be with us always, even unto the end of the world. Blessed be his name, we have been favoured with delightful passover feasts. The shout of the King of Kings is still heard in the midst of our Methodist camps: and the shout of Grace! Grace! resounds from many quarters. Our Almighty Jesus knows how to build his temple in troublous times. His work prospers in the hands of the elect Countess, who is gone to Bath, much recovered from her late indisposition. Worthy Lady Fanny Shirley proposes soon to follow, in order to reside there. Some more coronets, I hear, are likely to be laid at the redeemer's

feet. They glitter gloriously when set in and surrounded by *a crown of thorns*.

“ ‘ Subjects of the Lord, be bold;
Jesus will his kingdom hold:
Wheels encircling wheels must run,
Each in course to bring it on.’ ”

“ I know who joins in crying Hallelujah ! even a Waller, a Harriot, both heirs of the grace of life. That the Spirit of Christ and of glory may abide and rest upon them here, and that they may shine with distinguished lustre in his heavenly kingdom hereafter, most earnestly prays, less than the least of all, “ G. WHITEFIELD.”

Immediately after the date of the above, Mr. Whitefield left London on a visit to Lady Huntingdon. This was his last visit to Bath, and his trip was attended with remarkable success, not only there, but at Bristol, Chippenham, Castlecomb, Dursley, Rodborough, Gloucester, Cheltenham, Frome, and other places, to almost all of which he was accompanied by Lady Huntingdon and Lady Anne Erskine. “ Never were these places so endeared to me (says he) as at this last visit. Old friends, old Gospel wine, and the great Governor ordering to fill to the brim !

“ O to grace what mighty debtors ! ” &c.

In the month of May Lady Huntingdon, Lady Anne Erskine, Lady Buchan, Miss Orton, and Mr. Whitefield proceeded to Tunbridge Wells, to attend the dedication of the chapel there; from whence her Ladyship proceeded to Wales for the anniversary of the College ; and in the month of September returned to Bath for the winter. On her way from Trevecca she stopped for a few days at Berwick, the seat of Thomas Powis, Esq., and passing through Kidderminster, Worcester, and Gloucester, reached Bristol on Saturday the 9th of September, where she was joined by Mr. Wesley, who had arrived only a few hours before from Cornwall. On the 12th, her Ladyship visited Kingswood-school, and the society in connexion with Mr. Whitefield. The next day Messrs. Johnson, Hart, Brown, Andrews, and several other clergymen breakfasted with her. At eleven o'clock the sacrament was administered by Mr. Hart, after which Mr. Wesley preached on “ I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.”

Leaving Mr. Wesley at Bristol, her Ladyship, Lady Buchan, Lady Anne Erskine, and Miss Orton, proceeded to Bath ; and for some weeks after her arrival was constantly occupied with business of a perplexing and harassing nature :—

“ I have much cause (observes her Ladyship) to bless the Lord for his goodness to me, in bringing me back in health and peace, and for his remarkable interpositions in behalf of his cause and interest in this city. Many things tending to obstruct the furtherance of the Gospel,

have been happily removed ; and though sadly annoyed with affairs of the most perplexing nature, I am in no ways discouraged. The work is the Lord's ; He is with me, he upholds my feeble hands, and condescends to help my humble plans for the promotion of his glory, and the eternal good of my fellow immortals. He not only carries me through every difficulty, but favours me with much divine support. His glory, and the eternal good of my fellow-sinners, is the habitual desire of my poor sinful heart ; and I bless and praise him for it."

Previous to the anniversary of the College, Lady Huntingdon wrote to Mr. Berridge, inviting him to Trevecca, hoping that the change of air might prove beneficial to his health, which was so much impaired that he was quite incapable of attending to the duties of his parish. Mr. Hicks occasionally assisted him, but some of his parishioners becoming dissatisfied, he applied to Lady Huntingdon for some assistance. Mr. Glascott was accordingly sent thither, with directions to Mr. Maxfield to be ready to supply his place whenever he was called away to another part of the work. Mr. Berridge was reluctantly obliged to decline her Ladyship's invitation, from his inability to undertake so long a journey during the warm weather, which had reduced him to a state of great weakness and languor.

"Mr. Glascott (says he) has arrived—a very acceptable person to myself and to my flock. Not a dozing face, with a hoarse doctrinal throat ; but a right sharp countenance, with a clear gospel pipe. He is going about Everton this week. Afterwards he goes out on Mondays and returns on Saturdays. In six weeks' time he will be able to visit not all, but most of my churches. I hope you can spare him so long at least. I thank you most heartily for sending. The Lord multiply his grace, mercy, and peace upon yourself and upon your churches."

In the October of this year, Mr. Venn engaged to supply Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath, for some weeks, and early in the month left Huddersfield for that purpose, preaching wherever he could obtain a pulpit.

"Yesterday (says he) I was brought in health and safety to my journey's end. Many Christian friends I have met with, all expressing their love for me—a worm, sometimes not able to bear the sight of my own pollutions. Indeed I feel, under the expressions of kindness I receive, sometimes distressed ; and when I compare my imputed with my real self, I seem like a man of supposed large fortune, and living in splendour, who is, in fact, a bankrupt and nothing worth. At Northampton, no Mr. Madan ; so that I fear he is ill. I know what it is to suffer more, long after the blow has been given, than immediately upon feeling it. Probably he is now suffering anguish of spirit for his departed Isaac."

This severe affliction of Mr. Madan is likewise mentioned by Mr. Newton, in a letter to Captain Alexander Clunie :—

"Dear Mr. Madan has met with a heavy stroke indeed. He informed me of it by letter. But the Lord is able, and will be faithful, to give him strength according to his trial; and I hope this also shall work for good, and yield the peaceful fruits of righteousness to his soul."

From Northampton Mr. Venn proceeded to St. Alban's, where he met with his intimate friend, the Rev. Thomas Clarke, rector of Chesham Bois, Bucks, whom Mr. Romaine complimented with the epithet of "The Solomon of the age." The history of this good man is somewhat singular. He was originally of Brazenose College, Oxford, where he took the degree of B.A. At an early period his mind became the residence of vital religion; and, through all the subsequent stages of life, he evinced that he had not received the grace of God in vain. After he had taken holy orders, he was appointed to the curacy of Amersham, Bucks. From the commencement of his public work, he found means to be faithful to his ordination vows—to the souls of his parishioners—and to the truths of God. "A city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid." The difference between the doctrines inculcated by the rector and by his curate attracted general observation. While his manly and open avowal of the gospel, in its doctrines and influence, was rendered beneficial to some, it became a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to others, who persecuted him with unrelenting hearts. Among the persons to whom his ministrations were attended with saving effects was a relation of the rector. This circumstance, united with the clamours of the inhabitants, at length procured Mr. Clarke's dismissal. On this occasion, his spiritual children became deeply afflicted, and his adversaries enjoyed a temporary triumph. From Amersham he removed to Yorkshire, where he became acquainted with Mr. Venn, and by him was introduced to the notice of Lady Huntingdon, who highly esteemed him for his extensive erudition, his accurate knowledge of the various branches of science, and his great talents for biblical criticism, but, above all, for his exemplary conduct as a Christian and a minister of the gospel of the grace of God. While serving a curacy in Yorkshire, the wheels of divine providence were revolving to return him to his disconsolate friends, with double advantage. The excellence of his character, the extent of his learning, and the injuries he had received, being made known by Lady Huntingdon to the Marquis of Tavistock, he generously promised him the next vacant living in his gift. Some time after the Marquis was removed by death; but the Duke of Bedford, considering himself bound by the engagement of his noble relation, afterwards presented him to the rectory of Chesham Bois, about one mile distant from Amersham church. How

incapable of penetrating the designs of God are mortal men !—how unable to estimate the extent of good which a gracious Redeemer ordains, by means which they conceive to be most disastrous. Thus was Mr. Clarke settled in a situation much superior to his former, and sufficiently convenient for his late converts to enjoy all the advantages of his stated ministry.

Mr. Venn was highly gratified at meeting his old friend :—

“ Dear Mr. Clarke (says he) I was happy with. He preached last Sunday morning a discourse full of good sense, abundant in matter, searching and piercing to the heart, yet truly evangelical. A company of about one hundred persons have him for their teacher, whose good sense, and knowledge, and grace, qualify him for the largest sphere. This is one of the secrets not to be explored by us ; it is enough to know that the Head of the Church fixes His ministers as seemeth best to His infinite wisdom. From Mr. Clarke I went to Reading, and was received with unfeigned love by Mr. and Mrs. Talbot ; he rode with me on my way to Bath ; we had very much communion of heart. From Mr. Talbot’s I rode to Pewsey, and was most cordially received by Mr. Townsend : he is an excellent man, and inquired after Mr. Ryland and all Yorkshire friends, with great affection. From thence I came here yesterday ; and found Lady Huntingdon, and my dear son in the Gospel, as he will call himself, Mr. Shirley ; we are to share the work between us. I am made very much of I can assure you. My accommodations are very agreeable ; and every thing I could wish for is done to express respect. *In fact, I find there is no temptation stronger to vanity and to feed self-love than what a travelling popular preacher meets with.*”

The winter of 1769 was an unusually crowded season at Bath. Great numbers of the nobility attended divine service in Lady Huntingdon’s chapel ; and not a few were excited to seek after the things which make for their everlasting peace. Lady Fanny Shirley, Lady Gertrude Hotham, the Countess of Buchan, the Marchioness of Lothian, and some other pious persons amongst the nobility resided at this period at Bath. The narrative of Mr. Venn’s labours in the chapel of the Countess we shall give in his own words. And we cannot but note in every letter the cordial regard he bears to her Ladyship, and those who laboured for her. These are traits which speak the spirit of this departed patriarch, and speak to his honour. The excellent of the earth, without respect to their denomination, he honoured, attended, and countenanced. It was not, in his views, a matter of first importance, whether men assembled at church or at meeting, provided they gathered to the true Shiloh ; and without that, it was no matter where they assembled—a pagoda or a mosque were equally as good as a steeple and bells.

We insert a few precious gleanings from Mr. Venn’s corre-

spondence—they will warm the hearts, while they gratify the curiosity, of his and the venerable Countess's remaining friends, to whom these relics will be precious. They are from letters written to his friends, Mrs. Ryland and Mr. Kershaw, now united to him in glory:—

“ Bath, Nov. 4.

“ On Sunday evening last there was such a crowded audience, Mr. Shirley told me, as there never was before. The chapel doors were set open, and people stood in the court as far as the houses. That full description of the way of salvation, and the object of the believer's hope, the condition of his enemies, and the glory of his people, in the concluding verses of Isaiah xlv. was my subject. Happily I am much alone! though solicited to spend my time with one family after another all the day. You may judge of this, when I tell you I have read two quarto volumes, with other books, and written near twenty letters, without intermitting my study of the ever-blessed Book. Solitude is a great cherisher of faith; were we more alone, to pray and look back upon ourselves, and to look into ourselves—not to find any good, but to observe more of the amazing blindness of heart, unbelief, selfishness, and vile idolatry, which so benumb our feelings of the love of Christ—were we to be more alone for these purposes, we should enjoy more of the presence and joy of God. In the exercise of meditation and prayer, I can stand amazed, and be almost lost in astonishment at my misery and sinfulness—misery so great, in not feeling an everlasting admiration, love, and joy, in an incarnate Jehovah, and in the view of the great things of the Spirit of God which are revealed to me! At the same time this is my misery, it is my shame and guilt; for every thing ought to be loved according to its intrinsic worth. What a robber am I, and what sacrilege am I committing, when the affections of my heart are so cold towards my Lord! Sometimes I have touches which I would give the world they might last; but in an hour they are gone! Whilst they last, my heart swells with the vehement desire expressed in the hymn—

“ ‘ Nothing in all things may I see,
Nothing on earth desire, but Thee!’ ”

“ Bath, Nov. 5.

“ I am favoured with the pleasing sight, and with the animating example, of a soul inflamed with love to a crucified God—that stumbling-block to them that perish. In Lady Huntingdon I see a star of the first magnitude in the firmament of the Church. Blessed be God for free grace, that salvation is to every one that cometh to Christ! otherwise, when I compare my life and my spirit with hers, I could not believe the same heaven was to contain us. How do works, the works of faith and love, speak and preach Jesus Christ, in that devoted servant of His! No equipage—no livery servants—no house—all these given up, that perishing sinners may hear the life-giving sound, and be enriched with all spiritual blessings. Her prayers are heard, her chapel is crowded, and many sinners amongst the poor are brought into the City of Refuge. Happy is it for us, my friend, that we have

been brought into that city—that we know in whom we have believed—that we can say, ‘Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength!’—that we have been happily reduced to the necessity of confessing we have nothing to pay, nothing to plead, but *worthy is the Lamb!* This is all our relief, consolation, and triumph; and will be through all ages. I feel, from Lady Huntingdon’s example, an increasing desire, both for myself and you, and all our friends, that we may be active and eminent in the life of grace. Too apt are we to rest in life received, and not to be every day doing something for our Lord; either earnestly engaged in prayer, speaking affectionately to sinners, overcoming our selfish violent passions, or exercising mercy to our needy brethren: but it is by abounding in every good work, that our light shines before men, and we stand confessed the workmanship of God in Christ. I would urge you, and may God press it home effectually upon my own heart, to open our mouths wide to importune Him for the best gifts; and to live in the sight of all around us, beyond dispute, zealous conscientious worshippers, and dear obedient children.

“I have enjoyed in this visit, the edifying discourse and bright example of many of our dear Saviour’s family, all of them partakers of one life and one spirit, yet each distinguished by its particular hue and beauteous colour, more predominant than the rest. In one, I have been animated by ardent activity for the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls. In another, I was pleased and softened by conspicuous meekness and gentleness of spirit. In a third, I was excited to love and good works, by the fervent charity and brotherly kindness I beheld: and in a fourth, I was led to abase myself, and confess the pride of my heart, from the humility and brokenness of spirit which struck me. In the Head alone all graces, in their lustre, unite.”

On leaving Bath, Mr. Venn went to Sandwell, the residence of Lord Dartmouth, near West Bromwich, where he remained some time, having to do duty for Mr. Piercy, then at Brighton:—

“As soon as I came here (says Mr. Venn) the Earl, with as much love as you could wish he had for me, received me; and Lady Dartmouth the same. It often happens to me that the tender regard of my friends distresses me: as I cannot divide myself, nor spend my time with them as they desire. It is the case at present; Lord and Lady Dartmouth, with an earnestness that makes me blush, and which I cannot withstand, will not let me leave Sandwell till Monday the 11th.”

For some years previous to this period Lord and Lady Dartmouth attracted very general attention from the profession of religion they made, and the countenance they afforded to zealous and faithful ministers of Christ who were suspected of what was called Methodism. Early in life deprived of his father, the care of the noble Lord’s education devolved on his surviving parent, who became the second wife of Francis, first Earl of Guildford, by whom she was mother to the late Lord Willoughby de Broke and Dr. Brownlow North, Bishop of Winchester. From this period his lordship, with his sister, Anne (afterwards Countess

of Cardigan), and Elizabeth (married to Whitshed Keene, Esq. M.P.), principally resided with Lord Guildford. On the death of his mother, Lady Guildford, Lord Dartmouth left England to make a tour of the Continent; on his return from his travels through France, Italy, and Germany, in 1750, he succeeded his grandfather as Earl of Dartmouth, being then about twenty-five years of age; and five years after espoused the only daughter and heiress of Sir Charles Gunter Nicholl, by whom he acquired a very considerable addition to his fortune.

Shortly after his marriage, Lord Dartmouth became the intimate friend of Lady Huntingdon, to whom he was introduced by the then Countess of Guildford, widow of Lewis, Earl of Rockingham, daughter and co-heir of Sir Robert Furness, Bart., a woman of general knowledge, of infinite wit and pleasantry, and of a delightful temper, with a most disinterested mind. She was cousin-german to Lady Huntingdon, and niece to Lady Fanny Shirley. A few years after the decease of Lord Rockingham, she became the third wife of Francis North, first Earl of Guildford, by which marriage he acquired the noble seat of Waldershare, near Dover, and a large surrounding estate of great value. Her Ladyship possessed considerable influence in the higher circles, and had an extensive acquaintance with persons of genius. She was often at Court, and lost no opportunity of recommending religion to the notice of the great. It was at Lady Huntingdon's house that Lord Dartmouth first became acquainted with Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Wesley, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Jones, Mr. Madan, &c. In the letters of Whitefield and Mr. Hervey we find frequent mention of his Lordship. As early as the year 1757 the latter writes thus:—"I have not the honour of Lord Dartmouth's acquaintance; but I hear he is full of grace, and valiant for the truth; a lover of Christ and an ornament to his Gospel."

Lady Fanny Shirley was extremely intimate with Lord and Lady Dartmouth, and frequently corresponded with them. Receiving a letter from his Lordship with which she was particularly delighted, she enclosed it to her correspondent, Mr. Hervey, who, in reply, said:

"It is, indeed, a delightful sight to see a person of Lord Dartmouth's dignity and politeness closing a letter with the name of Jesus Christ. May we all know more and more of that just One! then it will appear meet and right; not a pious extravagance, but a most rational determination, *to count all things but loss for the excellency of Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

On another occasion he says to the same correspondent:—

"Permit me to wish you many edifying and delightful interviews

with Lord Dartmouth and his Lady. Of such interviews, I think we may use the words which I have been just speaking upon to my family, 'It is good for us to be here.' Oftentimes, while we are talking, grace is administered, and the fire kindles. We have brighter views of Christ, and firmer faith in his infinitely rich atonement. So may the hearts of my honourable friend and her noble acquaintance burn within them, whenever they confer about the Lamb that was slain, and the inestimable fruits of his blood."

Lady Fanny having mentioned Mr. Hervey to Lord Dartmouth, his Lordship was pleased to express a wish to see Mr. Hervey the first time he was in London:—

"Be so good, Madam (says Mr. Hervey), as to return my most grateful acknowledgments to the generous Lord Dartmouth: together with my ardent wishes that he may 'shine as a light in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation;' shine before God in the immaculate and everlasting righteousness of Christ: shine before men in all the beauties of evangelical holiness. I hope God will make him 'stedfast and unmoveable;' enable him 'always to increase in faith, and always to abound in the work of the Lord.'"

Lord Dartmouth soon began to experience a portion of that contempt and ridicule which all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must ever expect to meet from a proud, self-righteous, and gainsaying world. His Lordship's uncle, the Hon. Henry Bilson Legge, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, treated him with unmerited severity, and for a time refused to hold intercourse with him. But, through the kind interference of Lady Huntingdon, who obtained several private interviews with his Lordship's aunt, the Baroness Stawell, afterwards Marchioness of Devonshire, he was restored to the friendship of his relations, who ever after entertained a more favourable opinion of him and of the sentiments which he espoused. Indeed, for some years after, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lady Stawell were not unfrequently to be found amongst the circle who attended Mr. Whitefield's preaching at Lady Huntingdon's residence; and so much did his Lordship conciliate the esteem of his noble relatives, by a prudent and consistent line of conduct, that several of them became of the congregation at the Countess's, particularly his uncle, the old Lord Bingley, Lord and Lady Aylesford, Lord and Lady Andover, and Lady Anne Finch; and there is reason to hope not without lasting benefit to some of them.

His Lordship was esteemed a man of sense, and was considered a tolerable speaker in the House of Lords. He connected himself early in life with the Rockingham party, and when they came into power, in 1765, he was made first Lord of Trade,

and sworn of the Privy Council. His Lordship was the nobleman alluded to by the poet Cowper, in that passage in his poem on Truth :—

“ We boast some rich ones whom the Gospel sways,
And one who wears a coronet and prays ;
Like gleanings of an olive tree they show,
Here and there one upon the topmost bough.”

Amongst the Peers, none stood higher in Lady Huntingdon's and Mr. Whitefield's estimation, for piety or prudence, than Lord Dartmouth. George the Third confirmed this estimate of his Lordship's character. Few persons were more highly esteemed by his Majesty, who appointed him principal Secretary of State for the American department: which office his Lordship afterwards exchanged for the place of Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal: and some years after was constituted Lord Steward of his Majesty's household. In the course of the interview with which his Majesty favoured Dr. Beattie, the celebrated author of the “Philosophic Essay on Truth,” he asked him what he thought of his new acquaintance, Lord Dartmouth? Beattie replied that there was something in his air and manner which he thought not only agreeable, but enchanting, and that he seemed to him to be one of the best of men: a sentiment in which both their Majesties heartily joined. “They call my Lord Dartmouth an enthusiast,” observed the King, “but surely he says nothing on the subject of religion but what any Christian may and ought to say.”*

Lord Dartmouth patronised the college for the American

* The “Essay on Truth,” which was destined to establish the fame of Dr. Beattie, was first published in 1770, and in a few years ran through many editions. It was also translated into several foreign languages, and procured the author high marks of distinction, and an extensive acquaintance. He soon attracted the notice of Lady Huntingdon, who introduced him to Lady Chesterfield. “Everybody (says her Ladyship) speaks well of the Essay on Truth; and I am in hopes something will be done for the deserving author, who, I think, is not far from the kingdom of God. Lady Chesterfield has promised me to present a copy of the work to his Majesty, which may open the way to his promotion.” Not long after the King received the Essay from Lady Chesterfield, he honoured Dr. Beattie with a conference at Kensington, and granted him a pension. He was very strenuously urged to go into the Church, and very advantageous offers were made him, which he declined, lest the enemies of religion, who were irritated by his “Essay on Truth,” might allege, that he wrote the book from interested motives. The philosophical style of Dr. Beattie is imbued with the poetical; and this, perhaps, has contributed in no small degree to the celebrity of his Essays and Dissertations. His private character was valuable, and the religion which he so ably defended in his writings he adorned by his life. Among his friends were the first persons of the age, as Dr. Johnson, Bishops Porteus and Hurd, Mr. Gray, Mr. Burke, Mrs. Montague, &c.

Indians, and contributed largely towards the Orphan-house in Georgia. He was also one of the chief patrons of evangelical preaching at the Lock Chapel, and with Baron Smythe, gave the full weight of his rank and influence to that "hill of Zion" on which the dew of heaven has so often and so long descended. That influence was not small. Lord Dartmouth stood high at Court; and Baron Smythe, besides being descended from Lady Dorothy Sidney, eldest daughter of the celebrated Earl of Leicester, was Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer. Both were the personal friends of the Countess, and of most of the worthies who laboured for her.*

Lady Smythe was the steady friend and patroness of Mr. Venn for more than thirty years. Her Ladyship died in 1790, and by her last will bequeathed pecuniary legacies to Mr. Venn and to each of his children; and the advowson of Bidborough, in Kent, to his son, the late Rev. John Venn.†

Lord Dartmouth was the early patron of the Rev. Moses Browne, who had commenced his ministry as curate to Mr. Hervey. He became the patron of a more extraordinary character—John Newton: and to his Lordship he addressed the first twenty-six letters of the "*Cardiphonia*."‡

Mr. Newton had preached a good deal in Warwickshire and Yorkshire, and from his previous connexion with the Dissenters and Methodists was refused ordination by the Archbishop of York. Lord Dartmouth, however, prevailed on Dr. Green, Bishop of Lincoln, to ordain him, and of the Bishop's candour

* Sir Sidney Stafford Smythe gave Mr. Venn the living of Yelling, in Huntingdonshire, and was his steady friend and patron to the time of his death, in 1778. His funeral sermon was preached at the Lock Chapel by one of the chaplains, the late Rev. Charles Edward de Coetlogen, the contemporary of Rowland Hill, Simpson of Macclesfield, and Pentycross, at Cambridge. The sermon was afterwards published, and entitled, "The Death of the Righteous, a public loss; a token of respect to the memory of the Right Hon. Sir Sidney Stafford Smythe, late Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and one of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council."

† Lady Smythe was the daughter of Sir Charles Farnaby of Kippington, in Kent, Bart. Her youngest sister, Elizabeth, espoused William Hale, Esq., of King's Walden, brother to Mrs. Martin Madan, of the Lock; and a daughter of Mr. Hale married the cousin of Lady Huntingdon, the late Sir Edward Dering, of Surrendon, Bart. Lady Smythe was the bosom friend of Lady Mary Fitzgerald, who attended her in her last illness, and wrote Mr. Venn an account of her happy departure.

‡ The curacy of Olney was first offered to Dr. Haweis, who had been oppressively driven from Oxford, by the abused authority of Hume, Bishop of that diocese; but as he was then serving at the Lock Hospital, with Mr. Madan, he declined it, and introduced Mr. Newton to the acquaintance of his Lordship, as a person well qualified to fill the vacant curacy which was in his gift. How much the Church of Christ owes to this introduction, and his Lordship's kindness!

and tenderness Mr. Newton speaks with great respect. From him he obtained double orders, and became curate to Mr. Browne, at Olney, to the vicarage of which he was afterwards presented by Lord Dartmouth, and which he continued to hold till his removal to St. Mary Woolnoth, London, to which living he was presented by the benevolent and munificent John Thornton, Esq.

In 1776 Lord Dartmouth, then Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, had some prospect of being appointed Lord Lieutenant-General and General-Governor of the kingdom of Ireland. Mr. Toplady, who was well acquainted with his Lordship, observes in a letter to Lady Huntingdon, dated in October of that year:—

“It continues to be strongly reported and believed, that Lord Dartmouth will go to Ireland. If so, and he should be sent with a land-tax in his right hand, I shall heartily wish him safe back again. His Lordship’s nomination to the Lieutenancy, if certain, will probably issue in Mr. Madan’s promotion to the lawn: nor should I wonder if Mr. John Wesley was to obtain that episcopal consecration which he in vain solicited the Greek bishop to confer on him.”

Lord Dartmouth being of a pious turn of mind, his conduct was chiefly marked by an attention to religious duties, for which, as well as correctness of manners, he had been more distinguished than most men of the same rank. In private life, he bore the character of a good husband, a good father, and a kind master. He was the close friend of Lady Huntingdon, Mr. Whitefield, and all the eminent supporters of Calvinistic Methodism. It must be allowed that, as a *private* man, he bore himself with a uniform character through life; and with the *profession* invariably connected the *practice* of the religion of Christ.

On Mr. Venn’s return to Yorkshire he was desirous of thanking Lady Huntingdon for all her kindness and generous conduct towards him; but that return was unexpectedly retarded by his prolonged stay at Lord Dartmouth’s, and on his arrival at Huddersfield, the holidays intervening, he could not address her Ladyship till the 29th of December, when he wrote to the following purpose:—

“My dear Lady,—Detained to do Mr. Piercy’s work at West Bromwich, I did not reach my house before the latter end of last week; and the holidays immediately following, in which we have preaching every day, I was prevented returning sooner my most hearty thanks to your Ladyship, for all your maternal tenderness over me—for all the blessed things you spoke of that all-glorious name which I am called to the unspeakable honour of proclaiming—for all the care you took in

me, and your abundant kindness in more than discharging the expenses of my travelling, which indeed is the whole I would have received, if Mr. Lloyd would have permitted it to be so."

To the honour of Mr. Venn, his labours were without the least expectation of any remuneration; and all he ever got from Lady Huntingdon barely paid his journeys and his expenses. We notice this because many have circulated the basest stories respecting these apostolic men who laboured for her, none of whom, we may venture confidently to say, were ever a shoe-latchet the richer for any service done her Ladyship. Not that it is meant to impeach her boundless liberality. Never, perhaps, did mortal make a nobler use of what she possessed, live less attached to earth and its unrighteous mammon, or dispense it with a more open hand. She was one of the poor who lived upon her own bounty; and if she grudged anything, it was to herself. Never did human being sit more loose to money, or more jealously watch over the distribution of it, that every shilling she possessed should be employed for the glory of God. But with all her fortune and self-denial, her finances were inadequate to her calls, and it was impossible she could have done the noble acts that marked her character, if she had not found such men as those and many others happy to second her views with like nobility of disinterested zeal, and to spend their substance, as well as themselves, in the same glorious cause. The miserable sons of earth suppose there is always some worldly motive that engages the ministers of the Gospel: they cannot entertain an idea that the work is its own reward.

On leaving Bath, the first place Mr. Venn stopped at was Worcester, where a considerable awakening had taken place, under the ministry of the Rev. Thomas Biddulph, a few years previous. "In the way (says he) I preached at Mr. Skinner's, at Worcester (where Mr. Glascott had preached), to about two hundred people." The remains of Mr. Biddulph's congregation were gathered together by the labours of Sir Richard Hill, the late venerable Rowland Hill, Mr. Glascott, and some of the first race of students from Trevecca. As the churches were not generally open to him, Mr. Venn preached elsewhere; not thinking the souls of men unworthy of his pursuit, even in the meanest hovel. Where ignorance reigns, how shall sinners be plucked from the burning, if no man dare step out of the beaten track? Thus did Mr. Venn, nothing fearing, nothing doubting. And when the great Master says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life," what have ministers to apprehend? Let the violence of insolent and absurd authority, or the timid cautions of half-hearted friends, attempt

to quench the flame of holy zeal, thou faithful labourer lose not the full reward, let no man take thy crown !

At West Bromwich Mr. Venn preached several times, as Mr. Piercy was from home, supplying the chapel of Lady Huntingdon at Brighton. The Rev. Edward Stillingfleet, great grandson of the learned and celebrated Bishop of that name, was then minister of West Bromwich and chaplain to Lord Dartmouth :—

“ Mr. Stillingfleet (says Mr. Venn) sat under me, and I imagined would be offended. But I am sadly too hasty in judging. Lady Dartmouth told me he shed many tears ; and he himself thanked me very cordially, and said he was glad to hear such doctrine. His congregation is very large, and I believe there are many amongst them who live unto the Lord.”

From Lord Dartmouth's, Mr. Venn proceeded to Shropshire, and spent a day or two with Mr. and Mrs. Powys, and preached at Shawbury church for Mr. Stillingfleet :—

“ Mrs. Powys enquired much after your Ladyship, and still continues justly apprehensive of the danger of substituting doctrines in the place of power, life, and love. At Shawbury Mrs. Stillingfleet pleased me much. She seems a very upright and correct follower of the Lord. There is a good deal of stirring at present in the parish, and Mr. Stillingfleet is likely to do much good.”*

After spending a few days at Mr. Stillingfleet's, and preach-

* There was much opposition to the introduction of the Gospel into Shawbury church some time prior to this period. In the year 1766 Mr. Stillingfleet, who was a fellow of Merton College, Oxford, visited his friend, Mr., afterwards Sir Richard Hill, in Shropshire. Being desirous that he should preach in the parish church, Mr. Hill wrote a very handsome letter to the minister, requesting that he would lend his pulpit the following Sunday to Mr. Stillingfleet, an intimate friend of his, and a gentleman of most unexceptionable conduct and character, and firmly attached to the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the Church of England. This preamble Mr. Hill was in hopes would have prevailed on the minister ; but to such a height did his prejudices against truth run, that he absolutely refused, concluding, because Mr. Stillingfleet was recommended by Mr. Hill, he must be an enthusiast, or, in other words, a Methodist, and therefore would not suffer the ears of his congregation to be “ infected with his erroneous and delusive doctrine ;” though, blessed be God, many belonging to it were turned from darkness unto light, by means of that doctrine he was pleased to term erroneous and delusive. As the pulpit of the parish church was refused to Mr. Stillingfleet, Sir Rowland Hill, with the greatest kindness and candour, told his son that his friend should be welcome to preach in the chapel—an offer Mr. Hill accepted with thankfulness. About this time Mr. Hill began to expound the word of God for the edification of his neighbours in the vestry of Hodnet church ; and when Mr. Lee and Mr. Powys, gentlemen of opulence in the same neighbourhood, with Captain Scott and Mr. Stillingfleet, who was afterwards minister of Shawbury, united their efforts to introduce the glad tidings of salvation in the vicinity of Wem, the late Samuel Henshaw, Esq., coincided with their measures. He attended the ministry at Shawbury

ing twice or thrice at Shawbury church, Mr. Venn proceeded through Cheshire, and the first night stopped at Nantwich.

church on the Lord's day, whilst Mr. Stillingfleet, Mr. de Courcy, and Mr. Hallward supplied the pulpit ; and opened his own house in the evening, where, if a preacher could be provided, a sermon was preached ; if no preacher were present, he read a sermon himself, with great pathos, having previously studied the subject. After some time Mr. Henshaw applied to Lady Huntingdon to send some of her students to Wem ; and finding their house too small for the increasing number of people assembled, Mr. Henshaw erected a suitable place of worship contiguous to his house. This chapel was soon after made over, by a written document, to Lady Huntingdon, and supplied by the students from Trevecca for some years. In the beginning of the year 1777 her Ladyship directed Mr. Hawkesworth to stop at Wem, " where (says she) I have a chapel, and there you may preach, and also in your way to College, at Worcester." At the close of the same letter her Ladyship adds : " At Wem you are to enquire for Mr. Henshaw, attorney-at-law, at whose house the chapel is. They built it at their own expense, and most precious souls they are." In 1781 Mr. Richardson, a student from Trevecca, was supplying at Wem, but whether he remained any time there we are not certain. Mr. Richardson having expressed a wish to withdraw from the Connexion, it was intimated to her Ladyship by Mr. Henshaw, and in her reply she says :—" Your thinking Richardson's views might be more profitable for him, I cheerfully resign any restraints on my account, and by this fully release all my future influence over him, praying it may prove best, and ever wishing to serve and do him any possible good in any way." At the same time her Ladyship surrendered the chapel at Wem into the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Henshaw, for whom she ever entertained a very high esteem and friendship. " From a hint (says Lady Huntingdon) I received that it was both your and Mrs. Henshaw's secret wish that the chapel you would desire to be in your own hands, as I am sure it could not be in any so well or so proper, I send the engagement to you, and truly wish I could have ever had it in my power, on this or any other occasion, to prove the means of obliging either you or Mrs. Henshaw ; and as being happy that this has been the case hitherto, so it will not cease to be my wish, though not enough in my power to prove its extent, which I should ever hope might be unlimited for every best end. May our Lord abundantly bless you both, and encourage your hearts to persevere through every trial of faith and patience, till you arrive with the everlasting joy of the redeemed."

Mrs. Henshaw was the daughter of Stephen Tippet, Esq., of Truro, and awakened under the ministry of that eminent man of God, the late Rev. Samuel Walker. Mr. Henshaw was first introduced to her during a visit she made to her pious friends, Mrs. Edward Stillingfleet, of West Bromwich, and Miss Clay of Hodnet, Salop, afterwards the excellent wife of the well-known Captain Scott ; ladies possessed of handsome estates—and what was of far greater importance, ladies of eminent piety and exemplary prudence. One of Mrs. Henshaw's sisters was afterwards united to the Rev. David Simpson, a respectable clergyman at Macclesfield. During Mrs. Henshaw's last stage of life, when a complication of disorders appeared to prevail against her, and strength and spirits became exhausted, the Lord graciously enabled her to bear the whole of her affliction with great calmness and serenity of mind, and with patient resignation to his will. Some of her last words were, " Saviour ! be my refuge and strength !" Mr. Henshaw, whose devoted attention to her for thirty-five years was unabated, survived her but a short time, and on February 1st, 1801, he entered that

———"land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign."

His dying scene was tranquil ; he frequently employed his thoughts in devotional hymns and select scriptures, and expressed more than a resignation of mind to his dissolution, crying out repeatedly, " Come, Lord Jesus, come !"

Here he had the pleasure of meeting the Rev. John Smith,* the rector of the parish, who was a nephew to Mr. Matthew Smith, one of the first Methodists at Oxford, in 1729. Mr. Venn thus relates his interview with this gentleman :—

“ Of all the agreeable things I met with on my return home, none more surprised me with joy than meeting with Mr. Smith, the rector of Nantwich, a town that contains five thousand souls. Perhaps there was scarce one market town in the whole kingdom so thoroughly void even of the least appearance of regard to religion or sobriety. Just before I came to the town, I had heard of the rector, who is the talk of the whole neighbourhood. I sent my compliments to him, and we spent the evening together at my inn. He is about thirty-six, educated at Oxford; full of fire, and bold; his eye appears quite single, and his labours are indeed abundant. He does not yet preach the forgiveness of sins, but I think he will very soon preach the whole counsel of God. When, in the course of our conversation, I had an opportunity to urge this doctrine, as the blessing so suited to our misery, and that, instead of putting men upon helping at all themselves, we were to proclaim the power and grace of Jesus, as was done to the sinners of Jerusalem, Corinth, and Ephesus, by the apostles; he seemed much affected—shed some tears, and we immediately went to prayer, and parted with much affection on both sides. Thus, where Satan’s seat is, the bruiser of his head erects his own glory, and triumphs in the salvation of sinners.

“ I beg my best wishes to Lady Anne, with yourself, that this new year may be more blessed to you both exceedingly, and in whatsoever you set your hand to. I beg to be remembered to Miss Scott, Mrs. Dix, and all friends. From your Ladyship’s most affectionate and obliged servant in the Gospel,

“ H. VENN.

“ Mr. and Mrs. Ryland desire their best respects to your Ladyship.”

Amongst the men of renown who at this period supplied the chapels of the Countess of Huntingdon, there were few more popular than Mr. Townsend, of Pewsey, and Mr. Jesse, who afterwards succeeded Mr. Piercy at West Bromwich, and who at this time was labouring in Lincolnshire. “ He is (says Mr. Venn) a very excellent man, and seems appointed to evangelize the *Wolds*, the inhabitants of which are dark almost as the Indians.” Mr. Townsend had preached at the opening of the chapel at Bath with Mr. Whitefield, and from that time continued a most acceptable supply for many years. He was formerly Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, and at one time

* Mr. Smith was educated at Oxford, where he took the degree of B.A. He was author of several single sermons, and a work entitled “ Polygamy indefensible,” an answer to Mr. Madan. There is a portrait of Mr. Smith in the *Old Gospel Magazine*, edited by Mr. Toplady. In 1775 he published “ A Vindication of the Freedom of Pastoral Advice; or a Review of the Obligations which the Ministers of the Gospel are under plainly to declare the truth to their hearers.”

studied physic under Dr. Cullen, at Edinburgh, where he had for a fellow student Dr. Haweis, who afterwards married his sister, the widow of John Wordsworth, Esq., of the Isle of Thanet. At his outset in the ministry he distinguished himself as a preacher amongst the Calvinistic Methodists, and was selected by Lady Huntingdon as a fit person to visit Scotland and Ireland, as we have already shewn. He was very intimate with Mr. Newton, and on his obtaining the curacy of Olney often visited him and supplied his pulpit.

“ Mr. Townsend, of Pewsey (says Mr. Newton), has been with me three days, but goes off to-morrow for Aldwinckle. He is a ready, lively, humble man, beyond all my conception of him. I preached this morning: he is to bear his testimony in the afternoon and evening. We expect the whole country in to hear him. The Lord give us ears, and hearts to understand.”*

The early part of the year 1770 Lady Huntingdon divided between London, Tunbridge Wells, and Brighton. She left the latter place towards the end of March for Bath. Mr. Shirley was there about the same period, having spent a considerable portion of the winter in preaching at Tottenham-court Chapel, alternately with Mr. De Courcy, who also occasionally visited Brighton and Oathall. During the early part of this year, Mr. Venn was incapacitated from all exertion by an alarming illness, which was brought on by excessive labour in the discharge of his ministry. Lady Huntingdon recommended him to try the effect of a journey to Bath, Brighton, or Tunbridge Wells. The following is his reply to her Ladyship's letter:—

* In 1786 Mr. Townsend left England for France, whence he proceeded to Spain, where he remained during that year and the greater part of the succeeding one. Soon after his return to England he published his travels, under the following title, “ A Journey through Spain, in the Years 1786 and 1787; with particular attention to the agriculture, manufactures, population, taxes, and revenue of that country; and remarks in passing through a part of France.” This work, which is replete with interesting matter, went through several editions, and was afterwards translated into the French language. Besides sermons on various subjects, he published two pamphlets on the Poor Laws, Thoughts on Despotic and Free Government, The Physician's Vade Mecum, A Guide to Health. But his greatest and most elaborate work was published a few years before his death, and entitled, “ The Character of Moses established for veracity as an historian: recording events from the Creation to the Deluge.” The design of this work is to prove, by internal and external evidence, the credibility of the Pentateuch, more especially with reference to the creation, the septenary division of time, the state of innocence, the fall of man, the general prevalence of sacrifices, and the universal deluge. This is a peculiarly interesting work—a work on which the author employed more than *fifty* years in collecting his materials, and for the execution of which he was known to possess the requisite learning and ability. Mr. Townsend married, *first*, Miss Nankivell of Truro, and, *secondly*, Lady Clarke, in March, 1790. He died in 1817.

“Hud., May 20, 1770.

“I shall be very glad to be of service to your Ladyship’s plan, by preaching as much as I am able at Tunbridge or Brighthelmstone, where I can contrive to be by the first week in July, if nothing unforeseen prevents, and return from thence the beginning of September. I am sorry I cannot undertake the whole duty. But I am still weak in my breast, though, blessed be God, I am never laid by on a sabbath. If going to Tunbridge this season, or to Bath the latter end of the year, would be more acceptable, just as your Ladyship determines, will be equal to me. My children being at home for the holidays, prevents my setting out sooner than the time above-mentioned, if you choose I should go to Tunbridge. You know my attachment to my own people. The blessing of the Lord was given to make me more abundantly useful when I return from Bath, and encourages me to hope it may be so again. We have had a glorious winter: none like it since the two first in which the Gospel was preached. Mr. Ryland and Mrs. Ryland (who has been a mother a week) desire their best respects to your Ladyship. I beg you will be so kind as to present mine to Lady Fanny, Lady Lowther,* Lady Anne, Miss Godde, and Mrs. Bale, dear Mr. Shirley, and all my friends at Bath. I heartily wish you to see more and more the fruit of your labours for the good of souls, and that those who labour in your plan may be mighty in word and deed. I can speak from heartfelt knowledge, that it is a heaven upon earth to preach, to pray, to visit, and converse, under the Divine influence. But I find perpetual need of watchfulness, prayer, and much retirement, or else my soul soon grows dry, and I lose that sensible fellowship with my Lord. I shall miss your Ladyship’s animating sayings—but not your prayers, which I trust will be joined daily with mine, that I may not go hence without the Lord go with me—that he would pity my weakness, ignorance, darkness, and manifold corruptions, which I am oppressed with—which I feel so keenly, that I am sometimes ready to wish I had never undertaken the arduous office I stand in—that he would give me indeed the spirit of wisdom, counsel, and might, which alone can make me a vessel of honour for the master’s use. I am, your Ladyship’s affectionate and much indebted friend and servant,

“H. VENN.”

Lady Huntingdon was at Bath when the melancholy news of Mr. Whitefield’s decease arrived in London: for a time she was

* Catherine, Lady Lowther, was a daughter of Sir William Ramsden, Bart., of Byron, in the county of York, by Elizabeth, daughter of John Viscount Lonsdale. She was the second wife of Sir William Lowther, Bart., who was member for Pontefract; this Sir William, dying without issue, left his estate to his cousin, the Rev. Sir William Lowther, Prebendary of York, and rector of Swillington, whose son was created Earl of Lonsdale. Lady Lowther died in January 1778. “Last week (says Mr. Venn) my affectionate friend, Lady Lowther entered into her glorious rest. She was indeed an honour to her Christian profession!” By Lady Huntingdon, Lady Fanny Shirley, Lady Mary Fitzgerald, and all those eminent ministers of Christ who preached in Bath, she was highly esteemed, for her piety, benevolence, and amiable character. It was Lady Lowther’s grand-father, Sir John Ramsden, who presented Mr. Venn with the living of Huddersfield, at the earnest solicitation and recommendation of Lord Dartmouth.

nearly overwhelmed by thoughts of her unspeakable loss. Anxious to show every remark of respect for the memory of her dear departed friend and chaplain, she caused the pulpit, reading-desks, and galleries to be hung with black; and on Sunday the 18th of November, the day on which Mr. Wesley preached his funeral sermon in London, Mr. Venn preached a funeral sermon in Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath. His text was Isaiah viii. 18, "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel; from the Lord of Hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion." An immense crowd thronged every part of the chapel, and seemed deeply affected. Mr. Venn's sermon was afterwards published. How highly he thought of the apostolic Whitefield his own account of him will best tell.*

It was during this visit to Bath that Mr. Venn received the

* The following extracts from Mr. Venn's sermon on the death of Mr. Whitefield will gratify surviving admirers of both these great and good men:—

"Though the children of Christ are all for signs and for wonders in Israel, yet do they differ as one star differs from another star in glory. Talents, grace, and zeal eminently dignify some, and draw the eyes of men upon them. In the foremost of this rank, doubtless, is the Rev. George Whitefield to be placed, for his doctrine was the doctrine of the Reformers, of the Apostles, and of Christ: it was the doctrine of free grace, of God's everlasting love. Through Jesus he practised the forgiveness of sins, and perseverance in holy living, through the faithfulness and power engaged to his people. And the doctrines which he preached, he eminently adorned by his zeal and by his works. For if the greatness, extent, success, and disinterestedness of a man's labour can give him distinction amongst the children of Christ, we are warranted to affirm that scarce any one has equalled Mr. Whitefield.

"What a sign and wonder was this man of God in the greatness of his labours! One cannot but stand amazed that his mortal frame could, for the space of nearly thirty years, without interruption, sustain the weight of them. For what is so trying to the human frame, in youth especially, as long continued, frequent, and violent straining of the lungs? Who that knows their structure, would think it possible, that a person little above the age of manhood, should speak in the compass of a single week (and that for years) in general, forty hours, and in very many weeks sixty, and that to thousands; and after this labour, instead of taking any rest, should be offering up prayers, intercessions, with hymns and spiritual songs, as his manner was, in every house to which he was invited. The history of the Church of Christ affords but very few instances of men thus incessantly employing their whole strength, and, as it were, every breath they drew, in the business of their sacred function. And the truth is, that in point of labour, this extraordinary servant of God did as much in a few weeks as most of those who exert themselves are able to do in the space of a year. Thus labouring, not by fits and starts, but with constancy, and perseverance, and ardour unabated, his mortal frame, about nine years since, began to sink under the weight of so much work. If with the length and frequency of Mr. Whitefield's preaching, we consider the intenseness of voice and spirit with which he spoke, the greatness of his labours will appear perfectly astonishing: he knew not how to speak with less zeal, in his whole manner, than became the subjects of his discourse. The total ruin of the human race by the fall; the complete recovery of believers in Christ, his dying love, and the unsearchable riches of his grace, to be known experimentally in this life, though fully to be displayed in the next; and the infatuation of sinners led captive by

offer of the living of Yelling, in Huntingdonshire, to which he was presented by the interest of his friend Baron Smythe, then one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal.*

It was not to be expected that the tender and sacred bonds their lusts down to the chamber of death: these grand truths of more weight than words can paint, fired his whole soul; they transported him as much as earthly spirits are transported into vehemence when they contend personally for their own property; he cried out therefore, as his dear Lord was wont to do, with a voice audible to an amazing distance; hence, in a thousand instances, when the cause of God, more coolly pleaded, would have been neglected, he gained it a hearing, and carried the day; for the unusual earnestness of the speaker roused the most stupid and lethargic; it compelled them to feel; the matter must be momentous indeed which the speaker was urging as a man would plead for his own life.

"Should any one say, few in comparison, besides the low, ignorant, common people were his followers, I would answer—the souls of the poor and ignorant are to the full as precious as those of the rich and learned: and the mob have shown the justest discernment, and have received the truth, whilst men of wealth and learning, and education have trampled it under their feet. Witness the chief scribes and pharisees, who rejected both the Baptist and the Saviour when the common people justified God, and gave them both the honour of being sent from him. Indeed, in every age we see the Scripture fulfilled—*Not many rich, not many mighty, not many wise men after the flesh are called; but God hath chosen the poor, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom.*

"However, when the fierceness of prejudice was worn off, numbers who at first despised him, taught to do so by gross slanders, were happy under his ministry: and this honour was put upon him even to the last. He had a much larger audience statedly to hear him than any man in the whole kingdom, perhaps in all Christendom.

"Add to this, that the letters he received of grateful acknowledgment from persons of all ages and conditions in life, for the spiritual blessings he had conveyed to them, would fill whole volumes. Nay, it is a well known fact that the conversion of men's souls has been the fruit of a single sermon from his lips; so eminently was he made of God a fisher of men. But he was not more successful than he was disinterested in his labours; for though a vast multitude (which must ever be the case with those whom God is pleased remarkably to own) followed him, he had still no ambition to stand as the head of a party.

"The scourge of the tongue was let loose upon him, his name was loaded with the foulest calumnies: he was often in tumults, and more than once in danger of his life, by the rage of the people; he wore himself away in the service of souls; and when he died, he died quite exhausted by much speaking; but in his death he received an immediate answer to his own prayer—*That if it were consistent with the Divine will he might finish that day his Master's work.*

"For such a life, and such a death (though in tears under our great loss), we must yet thank God. And though we are allowed to sorrow, because we shall never see or hear him again, we must rejoice that millions have heard him so long, so often, and to such good effect: that out of this mass of people multitudes are gone before him we doubt not to hail his entrance into the world of glory; and that in every period of life, from childhood to hoary age, many of his children in the Lord are still to follow; all to be his crown of rejoicing; the only effectual everlasting confutation of his adversaries—that he ran not in vain, nor laboured in vain."

* Upon receiving the first intimation of this design of Baron Smythe to prefer him, Mr. Venn directly wrote to Lady Huntingdon, who had gone to London immediately after the funeral sermon for Mr. Whitefield, urging her to press for the nomination of his successor at Huddersfield, and recommending Mr. Ryland to her notice.

which united Mr. Venn with his flock at Huddersfield could be severed without exciting regret on both sides.*

Mr. Venn was deeply wounded in his feelings at leaving a flock amongst whom he had laboured with so much success:—

“No human being can tell (says he) how keenly I feel this approaching separation from a people I have so dearly loved. Your Ladyship knows how much attached I am to Huddersfield—where my poor labours have been acknowledged by the great Lord of the harvest—and where I have enjoyed so much and such near communion and fellowship with the Father and his son Jesus Christ. But the shattered state of my health, occasioned by my unpardonable length and loudness in speaking, has reduced me to a state which incapacitates me for the charge of so large a parish. Providence seems to have put it into the heart of the Lord Commissioner to offer this small living to me; and now, my dear Lady, my most faithful friend, pray for me, that the blessing of the Lord our God may go with me, and render my feeble attempts to speak of his love and mercy efficacious to the conversion of souls. At Yelling, as at Huddersfield, I shall still be your Ladyship’s willing servant in the service of the Gospel; and when I can be of any service in furthering your plans for the salvation of souls and the glory of Christ, I am your obedient servant to command.”

The last two or three months of his residence were peculiarly affecting. At an early hour the church was crowded when he preached, so that vast numbers were compelled to go away. Many came from a considerable distance to take leave of him, and to express how much they owed him for benefits received under his ministry, of which he had not been aware. Mothers held up their children, saying, “*There is the man who has been our most faithful minister and our best friend!*” The whole parish was deeply moved; and when he preached his farewell sermon,† neither could he himself speak without the strongest emotions, nor the congregation hear without marks of the deepest interest and affection.

After Mr. Venn left Huddersfield, the people who had profited by his preaching were repelled from the parish church by discourses which formed a marked contrast to those they had

* It was not for the sake of greater emolument that he took this step, for the income of Yelling was at that time little superior to that of Huddersfield; but it was solely on account of the declining state of his health. His zeal had carried him beyond his strength; and by his earnest and frequent preaching, during the ten years of his residence in Yorkshire, he materially injured himself, and brought on a cough and other symptoms of approaching consumption, which incapacitated him for longer usefulness in so large a sphere. He was only able, in general, to preach once in a fortnight, and the exertion rendered him incapable of rising from his bed for several days after.

† Easter day, March 30, 1771. His text was Col. iii., 2. “Christ is all and in all.”

lately heard within the same walls ; so that they were dispersed in various directions, some to neighbouring churches, some to Dissenting chapels. Several of them at length determined upon building a chapel, in the hope that they might be united together in one body, under a pastor of their own choice. Mr. Venn gave his sanction and assistance to this plan, and advised the people to attend the chapel after it was built. Mr. Venn also printed an affectionate pastoral letter to the people, dated the very week that the chapel was opened ; and with a liberality very uncommon, most cordially recommended the Rev. William Moorhouse as their minister, in which office he continued among them above fifty years, with great acceptance and success.*

On his removal to Yelling, the same ardent desire to be useful, when a spring of health enabled, prompted him to burst out on the right hand and the left ; and his own parish being but thinly inhabited (though his preaching drew a full auditory), he hesitated not to go into the neighbourhood, and preach in a variety of places, at Godmanchester, at the houses and barns of the farmers in the adjoining parishes, and elsewhere, always heard by attentive audiences, and blessed greatly to the souls of many :—

“ My congregations at the church (says he) are small, when compared to those I used to preach to at Huddersfield, but they are remarkably attentive, and seem to wonder very much at my doctrine and my earnest manner. Dear Mr. Berridge has been here, and has preached for me. He has encouraged me to go into the neighbouring parishes, where he has preached occasionally ; and I have had several congregations in barns and other places, and I hope good has been done. Your Ladyship would enjoy the sight of one of these rustic assemblies, and the avidity with which they drink, as it were, every expression that falls from my lips. Souls are perishing around me in every direction, but I have not strength to go forth as I used to do. I long to see your Ladyship, and to hear once more the many precious things

* Mr. Moorhouse had been a stated attendant on Mr. Venn's ministry for a number of years, walking to Huddersfield and returning, a journey of twenty-five miles. He was a warm admirer of his preaching, and Mr. Venn saw in his young hearer the presage of future eminence and usefulness. Between him, and Mr. Venn a very affectionate intercourse existed, as appears from a letter written by the latter shortly after his removal to Yelling, and when Mr. Moorhouse was newly settled at Huddersfield. This document has been rescued from oblivion in the memoirs of Mr. Moorhouse in the *Evangelical Magazine* for 1824, and exhibits a noble instance of Christian charity, the kindness of a father anxious for the welfare of a son in the Gospel of Christ. “ God's name be praised (says Mr. Venn) that your church is in a flourishing condition. It has my daily prayers. Remember us also at the throne of grace. I shall be glad to hear from you as my successor among a people whom I shall always love, and I hope to meet one day in glory. From your affectionate fellow labourer in the Gospel.” Mr. Moorhouse died July 2, 1823, aged 81.

from your lips, which invigorated my dead soul and gave me such vehement desires in times past. O pray that I may be animated with a burning desire to spread the glorious Gospel of my precious Lord and Master, and be content to spend and be spent in a cause so divine !”

Never ashamed of the brand of Methodism, or of those most liberally abused by a wicked world, but induced by the hope of being blessed to the call and conversion of sinners, this apostolic man ventured to preach in unconsecrated places, and at uncanonical hours, and the great Head of the Church bore testimony to the word of his servant. The word of the Lord no sooner began to be preached in the light and the love of it, than it immediately ran and was glorified.

Mr. Venn was of the middle stature; his countenance marked with pleasantness and sensibility, notwithstanding a redness, which might be easily mistaken for the consequence of intemperance. His voice was strong and powerful: his manner of delivery engaging and impressive; and he seemed himself deeply penetrated with the truths he delivered. His action was becoming his subject; and his manner of treating every theme united singular ability with the most solid experience.

CHAPTER XXX.

Lady Betty Germaine—Lord Chancellor Thurlow—Mr. Rowland Hill—Letters from Mr. Berridge—Mr. Roquet—Mr. Wills—Anecdote of Lavington, Bishop of Exeter—David Erskine—Illness of Lady Fanny Shirley—Letter from Mr. Venn—Marriage of Mr. Wills—Mr. Pentycross—Letter from Mr. Pentycross—Chapel at Wallingford—Mr. Toplady—Letter from Mr. Toplady—Mr. Romaine’s Essay on Psalmody—Lady Glenorchy—Mr. Holmes—Captain Scott—Mr. Fletcher—Mr. Venn’s visit to Bath—Lady Henrietta Hope—Letter from Lady Glenorchy to Lady Huntingdon—Argyle chapel at Bath,—Dr. Sheppard—Letter from Lady Huntingdon to Mrs. Pentycross.

IN the year 1771 the eccentric Lady Betty Germaine, widow of the notorious adventurer and gambler, Sir John Germaine, who had previously married the divorced Duchess of Norfolk, arrived in Bath, and paid her respects to Lady Huntingdon. She had been of her Ladyship’s parties in London to hear Mr. Whitefield; and at Lady Betty’s the Countess had met Horace Walpole, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and

other celebrated persons of the day. The niece of Lady Betty, the witty and eccentric Lady Craven, better known as the Margravine of Anspach, did not conceal her high opinion of the Countess; and the well-known Mrs. Montague, who had been long acquainted with her Ladyship, and who seldom associated with any one whom she did not think a person of information, was also very partial to her society, and has expressed a high opinion of her exalted worth. Lord Chancellor Thurlow, who was then at Bath, having signified a wish to be acquainted with Lady Huntingdon, Lady Betty undertook to introduce him. The Chancellor endeavoured to dazzle Lady Huntingdon with the variety and splendour of his talents; while she overwhelmed him with astonishment by the unaffected simplicity of her conversation and the depth of her theological acquirements. His Lordship was very fond of relaxing from the arduous duties of his office, but had a disagreeable habit of mixing oaths in his conversation at all times. It is said the reproofs of Lady Huntingdon were of singular service to him in this particular; so much so, as to excite the jocularities of some of his friends, who used to tell him he would soon be a convert to all her Ladyship's opinions. He was a man of a superior mind, and in many respects filled his high station with great and deserved reputation.

About this time the Rev. Rowland Hill commenced preaching at Bristol and in the neighbourhood. Many parts of Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire were visited by him, and he has himself recorded in his diary many of the texts from which he preached, and the effect of his sermons. But his headquarters were at Bath, at the house of the Countess of Huntingdon, where he always had a welcome reception. He was at this time under the frowns of his family, disappointed of admission into the Church, and distressed for money. His labours in her Ladyship's chapel were attended with remarkable success. Lady Betty Germaine brought many of the nobility to hear him, and great crowds attended whenever he preached. Mr. Berridge, in his usual quaint manner, notices Mr. Hill's visit to Bath, in a letter to her Ladyship, dated May 8th, 1771:—

“ I find you have got honest Rowland down to Bath : he is a pretty young spaniel, fit for land or water, and has a wonderful yelp. He forsakes father, and mother, and brethren, and gives up all for Jesus ; and I believe will prove a useful labourer, if he keeps clear of petticoat snares. The Lord has owned him much at Cambridge and in the North, and I hope will own him more abundantly in the West.”

He preached several times in the neighbourhood of Bath ; also at Rodborough, Painswick, and Dursley, to immense crowds.

From Dursley he went, for the first time, after preaching on the evening of Sunday, June 16th, to Wotton-under-Edge, a place that was destined to become his favourite summer residence in after life. The people behaved with remarkable attention, and stood in great crowds under the market-place, while he addressed them from Ephes. v. 14, "Awake, thou that sleepest," &c. An old lady, of one of the most respectable families of the town, who was awakened to a sense of religion under his ministry, used frequently to describe his first visit to Wotton. She was sitting at her tea, when a relation suddenly came in, and said, "Ann, the baronet's son, who goes about preaching, is now under the market-house." Are you sure it is the baronet's son himself?" "Yes, that I am, for I saw his brother, Mr. Richard Hill, not long ago, and he is so like him, I am sure he is of the same family." Upon this she accompanied her friend, out of curiosity, to see and hear the stranger, little thinking of the alteration his preaching would be the means of producing in her own views of herself and of her Saviour. One man who stood by her seized a stone, and was going to throw it at Mr. Hill; but another who was near him laid hold of his arm, and said, in the broad dialect of Gloucestershire, "If thee dost touch him, I'll knock thy head off!" when the assailant dropped the stone, and the people soon became quiet, overawed by the solemnity of the subject and the earnestness of the preacher.

In the midst of these labours he received the following letter of encouragement from the veteran in the same cause at Everton. The letter was directed to "Rowland Hill, Esq., to be left with the Right Honourable the Countess of Huntingdon, at Bath, in Somersetshire." It was dated May 8, 1771, the same day on which he wrote to her Ladyship:—

"Dear Rowley,—My heart sends you some of its kindest love, and breathes its tenderest wishes for you. I feel my heart go out to you whilst I am writing, and can embrace you as my second self. How soft and sweet are those silken cords which the dear Redeemer twines and ties about the hearts of his children! How different from mere natural affection, and much more from vicious self-love. Surely it is a pleasant thing to love with a pure heart fervently; and something of this love I feel for you, which brings a melting tear into my eye, and refreshes my very body as I write. Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. May heavenly truth beam into your soul, and heavenly love inflame your heart! I suppose you are now arrived in the West, and are working as a labourer in your Master's vineyard. Be faithful and diligent, and look up to your Master continually for direction and assistance. Remember his gracious promise,—'Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.' He will supply you with wisdom,

strength, and courage ; for he sends none upon a warfare at their own cost. I think your chief work for a season will be to break up fallow ground. This suits the accent of your voice at present. God will give you other tongues when they are wanted ; but now he sends you out to thrash the mountains, and a glorious thrashing it is. Go forth, my dear Rowley, whenever you are invited, into the devil's territories ; carry the Redeemer's standard along with you, and blow the Gospel-trumpet boldly, fearing nothing but yourself. If you meet with success, as I trust you will, expect clamour and threats from the world, and a little venom now and then from the children. These bitter herbs make good sauce for a young recruiting serjeant, whose heart would be lifted up with pride if it was not kept down by these pressures. The more success you meet with, the more opposition you will find : but Jesus sitteth above the water-floods, and remaineth a king for ever. His eye is ever upon you, and his heavenly guards surround you. Therefore fear not ; go on humbly, go on boldly, trusting only in Jesus, and all opposition shall fall before you. Make the Scriptures your only study, and be much in prayer. The Apostles gave themselves to the word of God and to prayer. Do thou likewise ; labour to keep your mind in a heavenly frame—it will make your work pleasant, and your preaching and your conversation savoury. Now is your time to work for Jesus ; you have health and youth on your side, and no church or wife on your back. The world is all before you, and Providence your guide and guard. Go out, therefore, and work whilst the day lasteth ; and may the Lord Jesus water your soul, and give ten thousand seals to your ministry ! I am, with great affection, your friend,

“ JOHN BERRIDGE.”

The beginning of June Lady Huntingdon received another letter from the vicar of Everton. The health of that good old man was declining rapidly as the warm weather advanced ; and fearing he should soon be entirely laid aside, wrote to entreat her Ladyship to send her chaplain, Mr. Glascott, to supply his church, as the congregations were unusually large during the summer months, and it would grieve him to see them as sheep without a shepherd.

“ Everton, June 8, 1771.

“ My dear Lady,—I am coming early with another letter, because I am yet able to write, and do not know how long I shall be able. My health and strength are declining apace since the warm weather came in. My legs are almost gone, and my horse is almost useless. As yet I have been able to do whole duty on the Sabbath, but fear I shall be laid up soon. Do, my dear Lady, wrestle with me in prayer, that I may be strengthened to labour ; and get the men and women of Israel to help. The same fervent prayer that opened Peter's prison-door may open the door of my mouth. Jesus loves to bring his disciples to his feet, and his heart is so tender he cannot resist much importunity. I would fain prattle a little for him in the pulpit this summer ; for we have now large congregations, and it is sad, very sad, to

have them broken up, and to be laid aside myself altogether, as a broken vessel. If my Lady could spare Mr. Glascott for six weeks in the hottest part of the summer, it might be of great use. He is very dear to me, and very acceptable to my flock, and the best marching soldier in the king's Cassock regiment, which regiment, like the king's guard, is usually more for show than for service.

"Mr. Venn is coming to Yelling, nine miles from Everton, but he is weakly himself, and cannot dismiss the old curate at present, without quarrelling with his whole parish; so that I can expect no Sunday help from him. Mrs. Lyons has dropt a hint about providing me with a curate by subscription. The proposal is very agreeable to me, and might be very useful. Doors are open, and ears are open everywhere, but messengers are wanting. There are several serious students at both Universities, but I fear they are very prudent and very doctrinal, and such would not suit me. If one of your college could be ordained, he might make a good field-fighter; and if it is my Lord's mind, he will soon put a gown on his back, notwithstanding all opposition. But enough of this matter. I weary you, and weary myself with writing about it. Every subject proves barren but Jesus; and my poor feeble heart droops when I think, write, or talk of any thing but him. Oh! that I could get near unto him, and live believingly upon him, looking up to his eye for direction, leaning on his arm for support, fed with the milk of his word, quickened by the breath of his Spirit, and clothed with the robe of his righteousness. I would walk and talk, and sit and eat, and lie down with him. I would have my heart always doating on him, and find itself ever present with him. The work is thine—Lord, help me! I cannot come to thee, but thou can'st come to me. A welcome lodging thou hast provided in my heart; why standeth my Lord without? Come in, come in, thou heavenly guest, and abide with me day and night for ever. May this Angel of the covenant guide, guard, and bless you, and prosper every labour of love undertaken for his sake! Grace be with you, and with

"JOHN BERRIDGE.

"P.S. Kind love to all that love Jesus."

About the middle of June Mr. Romaine arrived in Bath, and shortly after Mr. Townsend, who had left Edinburgh in March to supply the chapel at Bretby, where he remained some weeks previous to his return to Pewsey. Towards the end of June Lady Huntingdon left Bath, and visited Frome, Pensford, Shepton-Mallet, Warminster, Bradford, and many other places in Somersetshire and Wiltshire; and there is reason to believe several were brought to God at that time by the ministry of Mr. Romaine and Mr. Townsend, who preached very frequently in all those places, sometimes in the churches, and sometimes in private houses, to very large auditories. A few days after her Ladyship returned to Bath, she received an invitation from Mr. Ireland to spend a few days at Brislington, near Bristol, and accordingly went thither, with Mr. Romaine, on the 15th of July. Mr. Charles Wesley being at that time in Bristol, she enjoyed

many opportunities of conversing with him on the subjects then in debate between Mr. Wesley and so many eminent characters in the Christian world. A few days before the arrival of Mr. Wesley to attend the conference which was to be held in Bristol on the 6th of August, Lady Huntingdon left Brislington for Trevecca, where she was joined by Mr. Shirley, after he had received Mr. Wesley's recantation of the obnoxious propositions contained in the Minutes of Conference for 1770.

During her Ladyship's absence from Bath, the chapel was partly supplied by Mr. Browne and Mr. Roquet,* one of her most valued and intimate friends.

* Mr. Roquet was the son of a French Protestant refugee, whose father was condemned to the galleys for his religion. He was early admitted into the Merchant Tailors' School in London, where he was instructed in the various branches of classical learning. While in this situation, and closely engaged in the pursuit of his youthful studies, he was led providentially to hear Mr. Whitefield: nor did he hear in vain. The Lord was pleased to call him effectually by his grace, and in this his early youth revealed his Son to him, the hope of glory. Whilst at St. John's College, Oxford, he received repeated invitations to preside over the school instituted by Mr. Wesley, at Kingswood, near Bristol, for the children of the Methodists, and for the sons of itinerant preachers; which he accepted through the purest motives, and in which situation he acquitted himself with singular success. Mr. Roquet was preceded in his situation as master of Kingswood school by several well-known characters, particularly the Rev. John Cennick, the Rev. Walter Sellon, the Rev. John Jones, and others. Having spent three or four years in this employment, during which time he preached frequently, as opportunity offered, he applied for orders in the Church of England. A title being procured for him in the diocese of Gloucester, he was ordained deacon by Dr. Johnson, then Bishop of Gloucester. His fidelity and zeal were, however, too great to admit of his long continuance in his curacy: he was soon dismissed from it for preaching from house to house, and in the gaol of Bristol. He was, notwithstanding, presented to a vicarage by the Lord Chancellor, and ordained priest by Dr. Wills, the aged Bishop of Bath and Wells, who had ordained his intimate friend, the Rev. Rowland Hill. His Lordship, finding him to be a truly worthy man, notwithstanding the cry of *Methodism* which had been raised against him, received him with parental affection, and spoke of him to many in terms of the highest respect. Being appointed by the Bishop to preach at the next ordination, he delivered an excellent sermon from these words: "Feed my sheep." This sermon drew down upon him such severe censures, that the Bishop desired a copy of it might be sent to him, and after having read it, wrote him a most affectionate letter, expressing his entire approbation of its doctrines, and assuring him of the continuance of his friendship.

Mr. Roquet soon after exchanged his vicarage of West Harptree for the curacy of St. Werburgh in Bristol. He was also appointed lecturer of St. Nicholas, and chaplain of St. Peter's Hospital. After this Mr. Roquet pursued his own course unheeded. In November, 1771, he was solicited to preach at the opening of the Tabernacle at Trowbridge. The Rev. John Clark, who was instrumental in establishing a religious interest in that town, preached in the morning, Mr. Roquet in the afternoon, and Mr. Ware, one of Lady Huntingdon's students, in the evening. Such was the liberality manifested by Mr. Roquet towards the Dissenters and Methodists, with whom, in all essential points of doctrine, he was one in heart and mind, that to the day of his death he continued to preach the anniversary sermon at Trowbridge, without any notice being taken of his irregularity.

In the month of September, 1772, the late Rev. Thomas Wills being in a bad state of health, was advised by his physician to go to Bath, for the benefit of the waters. Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley were there at the same time, and were much delighted with a personal introduction to this eminent minister of Christ, who was destined by Divine Providence to take so prominent a lead in the great revival of religion.*

After drinking the waters at Bath for about six weeks, it pleased God to restore his health, and he returned to St. Agnes, to the great joy of his people. During his stay in Bath he

* He was a native of Truro, and received his first serious impressions under the ministry of that eminent man of God, the Rev. Samuel Walker. Being designed for the ministry, he was entered a student and a commoner of Magdalen Hall, Oxford. The late Dr. Haweis, his friend and townsman, was then a commoner of Christ Church: and to him Mr. Wills was particularly recommended to introduce him to a respectable acquaintance, from the same school, and under the tuition of Mr. Walker. The Doctor had carried to college a deep sense of divine truth; and abandoning the profession of physic, to which he had been bred, had determined (with the warm approbation of Mr. Walker) to addict himself to the ministry of the word. With such happy impressions on his mind, his active spirit soon began to diffuse a savour of the same divine truth into the minds of many of his fellow collegians; and a few of them, desirous of improving by his superior knowledge, used to assemble and drink tea in his room, read the Greek Testament, converse together on divine subjects, and before they parted, join in prayer.

It was one of these social meetings to which Mr. Wills, when he entered college, was introduced; and the first time he had ever knelt in such a society was in the cloisters of Christ Church: he was struck with the prayer, and on looking back, could perceive no book which surprised him more. The impression, however, of what he heard was fixed on his mind; and from that time he attached himself to his friend, and constantly attended his instructions and ministry; and their connexion grew closer, by the removal of Dr. Haweis, as a gentleman commoner, to the same house as Mr. Wills, soon after the former entered the ministry. Here, with a few others like-minded, they often breakfasted in each other's rooms alternately, and the intercourse became mutually profitable.

Having completed his terms at the University, he was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Oxford, in 1762; and on Trinity Sunday, 1764, was admitted to priest's orders by Dr. Lavington, Bishop of Exeter.

Immediately after his ordination Mr. Wills left the University, and went to be resident curate to Mr. Walker's churches of St. Agnes, and Perran, in Cornwall. The latter he kept but a short time, the former he supplied upwards of ten years—it was the only benefice he ever possessed in the Establishment. From the moment he became curate at St. Agnes he laboured in his high and important office with energy and zeal; and the Lord graciously honoured his ministry to the call and conversion of many souls. His education, acquaintance, and reading, had fixed his views decisively respecting the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, which he embraced in the sense called *Calvinistic*; and though many of the Wesleyan Methodists who attended his ministry were differently minded, yet he won the universal suffrage of his hearers by a faithful address to their consciences; and, studiously avoiding all asperities of controversy, he endeavoured to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The church was filled from door to door, and the congregation were remarkable for their early attendance, so that Mr. Wills has been heard to say, it was with difficulty he could get to the reading-desk.

preached frequently in Lady Huntingdon's chapel, and his ministry was peculiarly acceptable and popular.*

About the same period that Mr. Wills arrived in Bath, the late David Erskine, Esq., was sent thither by his medical advisers. He was a man of fortune, who had partaken of and drank deep into the pleasures and vanities of this world, till about fifteen years before his death. Then it pleased the Lord to afflict him with great trials, which, through mercy, were made the happy means of bringing him to a sense of his lost state by nature, and of producing in him an earnest desire for the salvation of his soul.†

After he had drank the waters for about three weeks, Mr. Erskine was seized with a violent bleeding of the nose, which he survived only ten days. During this time his mind was in a state of perfect tranquillity. When Mr. Wills called to see him, he said, with the greatest earnestness, "What a wretch am I, that the Lord Jesus should bestow his free grace and pardoning love upon me, after having devoted the chief of my days to the service of Satan!" Just before a fit came on, which he apprehended would terminate his earthly existence, he lifted up his hands, and said, "Now for heaven!" When Lady Huntingdon told him how much she wished to lie in his place, he answered, "No—you must wait till you have done what the Lord has given you to do here; and then he will come and take you to

* Mr. Wills was of the middle stature, rather inclined to corpulency. His complexion dark, slightly marked with the small-pox, full and round faced. When in his zenith he was a noble figure in the pulpit, and his attitude was graceful and majestic. It may be worthy of notice, that Lavington, who without scruple ordained Mr. Wills, refused to accept the testimonials of Dr. Haweis, which were signed by Mr. Walker of Truro, Mr. Penrose of Gluvias, and Mr. Mitchell of Veryan, under the pretence that because THEY PREACHED FAITH WITHOUT WORKS, they were not even worthy of credit. Ere now the fruit and works of the accuser and the accused have been weighed in the unerring balance!

† For two years he continued under very great darkness and distress of mind, using every means, and labouring hard to make himself holy by the law: but the more he strove in this way, the more he was condemned. He then betook himself to those that were esteemed by the world men of judgment and prudence, seriousness and gravity, to point out to him the way to eternal happiness; but these proved blind leaders of the blind. Now he determined to omit no opportunity of attending all public ordinances; and ever made it a rule, when he passed by any place of worship, whilst service was performing, to enter, in hopes of hearing of the way of peace. Accordingly, as he was going by St. Dunstan's, in Fleet-street, on a Thursday evening, he went in as usual, and heard Mr. Romaine preach on the first verse of the twenty-third Psalm—"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Under this sermon it pleased God graciously to manifest himself, and his great salvation, to his distressed and wounded heart; and from that period to the end of his mortal course he had peace with God, and peace in his own conscience, and his walk was exemplary and such as became a follower of Christ.

himself." At another time he said to her, "Oh, what a comfort and stay have I found and experienced in my own soul from that blessed truth, the unchangeable love of God to his redeemed children!" Upon another occasion he said, "My desire is, that the whole will of God may be done in me, and by me; and for that end I would be as a blank paper in the hands of God." Just before he died, he was asked by Mr. Shirley, if he was happy? He answered, "Yes, very, very happy; and had I strength, I would sound forth the praises of my blessed Redeemer to the uttermost parts of the earth."

Thus was the power of vital Christianity evidenced by a most gloriously triumphant death. "Another (says Lady Huntingdon) has just gone to heighten the triumphs above, and swell that everlasting song of praise which shall roll in heaven for ages and millions of ages more than human thought can reach. Eternal praise to Him for such signal displays of his mercy, love, and power to us poor worms of earth!" His funeral sermon was preached at her Ladyship's chapel, to a very numerous and deeply-affected congregation, by Mr. Shirley, from Phil. i. 21: "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

We now pass on to the winter of 1773, at which time Lady Huntingdon was deeply afflicted by the alarming and painful indisposition of Lady Fanny Shirley. Mr. Shirley was supplying the chapel at this season, and was likewise deeply exercised by the loss of one of his children. Mr. Venn's letter on this occasion is full of consolation and deep interest:—

"Yelling, Dec. 7, 1773.

"My dear afflicted friend,—Your letter was the third which brought me the doleful tidings of my beloved fellow-traveller's suffering under the all-wise disposal of Providence. One bereaved suddenly of the husband of her youth, and the most tender one imaginable—another oppressed so with a cancer as to be unable to lie down in her bed, with no other prospect but that of excruciating pain, till she receives her blessed call to enter Paradise;* and the next news was your loss. How do we stand exposed like soldiers in the day of battle to wounds and death, to suffer in ourselves or in our friends every day! Were it not for the spiritual blessings enjoyed by faith, who would be able to bear with thankfulness the crosses appointed for him? I am thankful, therefore, on the dear Evangelist's account, that he is called away so soon to enter into rest, to be made wise, and perfectly holy, and happy, at once amongst the innumerable multitude of human kind who in their tender years were removed out of a world of iniquity and of trouble. I love my dear offspring much—yet should rather see them depart for glory, than remain to fight through all the temptations and

* Lady Fanny Shirley.

enemies that encompass them, and that all children do depart to enjoy bliss I can have no doubt ; because though corrupt as born of Adam, I never read of the execution of the sentence except where contention against the truth, disobedience and perseverance in it, have gone before ; the whole voice of Scripture speaks of men being *adjudged* according to their works—from whence I conclude that children, who by reason of their tender age are not subjects capable in general of the knowledge of divine things, will never be condemned. Besides, whilst we hold, as we are impelled to do by Christian verity, the doctrines of Predestination and Election, we must hold them scripturally—not so as to infringe on his goodness and love—not so as to make the predominant features in the divine character severity and inexorable justice—not so as to annul the oath of God, that he taketh no pleasure in the death of the wicked. I believe no one is more firmly fixed in those doctrines than myself ; but still I must say, I think we ought so to press them as to display always the loving-kindnesses, that the vessels of wrath are first endured through the long-suffering of God till they are fitted for destruction.

“ It would be a double pleasure to me to visit Bath now ; but I can have no hope to do so till spring ; then, if I am not disappointed, I shall be able, should it meet with your plan, to join again in speaking for our everlasting friend, with one of the same mind and judgment with yourself, dear to me indeed above most of my fellow labourers. Mrs. Venn desires with me, to be remembered to Mr. Shirley, and as we never part, if I come, she will be rejoiced to see two of my friends who contributed so much to make my stay in Bath most agreeable indeed. May the God of patience and all consolation be with my dear Mr. Shirley. May he incline his heart to say with joy my heart is in heaven, my treasure is in heaven, and in a few years more I shall be there too. I pray remember me to Lady Fanny, for whom I feel.

Yours, &c.

“ H. VENN.”

Not long after this Mr. Venn went to Bath. Lady Fanny's complaint, as it continued to make inroads upon her constitution, became every day more and more dreadful ; yet, in a manner that was truly surprising, she was enabled to endure her sufferings with patience and resignation, and even to express great pleasure in bearing them. If at any time her Ladyship felt disposed to murmur on account of her affliction, she endeavoured to realize to her mind that weight of suffering which the Redeemer for her sake endured which soon caused her, to forget her own. Of her acquiescence to the divine will in her trying illness many who visited her could bear ample testimony. The physician who attended her one day observed to Mr. Venn, that he was quite at a loss to explain how she was enabled to bear such a severity of suffering as he well knew attended her complaint, with so much tranquillity and so little symptoms of murmuring and restlessness. “ Can you account for it, Sir ? ” added

he. "Sir (said Mr. Venn), that lady happily possesses what you and I ought daily to pray for—the grace of her Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost." Thus satisfactorily, though somewhat to the surprise of the doctor, did the divine explain what the physician was unable to account for.*

Lady Huntingdon continued at Bath, usefully and actively employed, till the month of March, when she went to London, to be present at the opening of her chapel in Westminster. She visited Weymouth and Trevecca also this year; and in the month of October went into Sussex.

"With the Lord's leave (says her Ladyship I am to be, October 23rd, at Chichester, for the opening of the chapel there; and should the Lord (whose I am, and whom I only wish to follow) have no clear call for me, I shall return to Bath in my way to my much-loved college, where I have found so much of that fuel that is kindled only by the true fire from off the altar."

Mr. Wills paid his second visit to Bath this year; and preached with great acceptance and success in her Ladyship's chapel. It was at this time he was united to Selina Margareta Wheeler, third daughter of the Rev. Granville Wheeler and Lady Catherine Wheeler, of Otterdan-place, in Kent, and niece to Lady Huntingdon. Her education was favourable to the cultivation of her mind and the formation of her habits and manners. Her situation and connexions in life were such as had a tendency, with the Divine blessing, to cherish a spirit of piety, and to fix deep impressions in favour of the grand and essential principles of the Gospel. But it does not appear that she made any solemn surrender of herself to God, till after she came to reside with the Countess of Huntingdon. Here she had frequent opportunities of hearing several eminent ministers of Christ, under whose powerful and energetic preaching she was led to a saving acquaintance with divine things. With Lady Huntingdon and the Ladies Hastings, sisters to Lady Catherine Wheeler, she

* Horace Walpole, in his letters, mentions the dangerous illness of Lady Fanny at this time, and that she was very near her end. He had been very intimate with her Ladyship, but always ridiculed her sentiments and change; and when ever he mentioned her, styled her "Saint Fanny."

† One of the Miss Wheelers married Mr. Medhurst, of Kippax; one of his grandsons is the present incumbent of Ledstone, in Yorkshire; another, Major Medhurst, who married a Sicilian lady, by whom he has a numerous family, resides in that country. Another of the Miss Wheelers married the Rev. James Stuart Menteith, of Closeburn Hall, in Scotland. She died in August 1793, aged 57. Her son, the present Charles Granville Stuart Menteith, was created a baronet at the coronation of Queen Victoria. His eldest daughter is the present Countess of Mar.

was a great favourite, and for a number of years occasionally resided with her Ladyship, who ever acted towards her with maternal kindness and tenderness. It was during her visits to her sister, Mrs. Medhurst, at Kippax, that she became acquainted with Mr. Venn, who continued to correspond with her for a number of years. His letters to these excellent women prove the cordial esteem and friendship which he entertained for them.*

Much about the same period, also, Mr. Pentycross, who had just been presented to the living of St. Mary, Wallingford, through the interest of Mr. Romaine, and had been supplying her Ladyship's chapel at Chichester for a few weeks, arrived in Bath for the first time, on a visit to Lady Huntingdon.†

He came in good spirits, for his flock was increasing, and the work of the Lord prospered. His delight at this discovery, and his gratitude to God for thus blessing his labours, are best expressed in his own words :—

“ Madam,—Ever since my return to Wallingford I have been fully occupied in my ministerial labours. Glory be to God ; the Sun of Righteousness has at length arisen, and shines upon this part of the vineyard. Let unbelief be confounded. If God will work none can let it. How often has my wicked heart suggested that the “ *Lord's*

* Mr. Wills died on the third of April, 1814, at Boskenna, in Cornwall, in the 82d year of his age.

† Mr. Pentycross was observed by the Countess from the beginning of his course. “ Our dear Penty (says Mr. Whitefield) is under the cross at Cambridge ;” he was persecuted there. “ There is something very amiable in dear Penty (says Mr. Berridge). He came to my house about three weeks ago, and brought two pockets full of doubts and scruples relating to the Articles and Liturgy. I would fain have had the scruples left at Everton, but he took them all back with him to college, and seemed determined not to part with them. I believe the Lord loves him, and designs him for great things. Perhaps he may be intended for a spiritual comet, a field preacher like yourself (Mr. Whitefield) : this seems to be his great aim and ambition. When he left me he talked of going to the Welsh College (Trevecca). May the Lord direct him !”

In the first commencement of his ministry he was patronised by Mr. Romaine, for whom he occasionally officiated with much acceptance. In the beginning of the year 1774 he obtained the “ *living*” of St. Mary's, Wallingford. It is rated in the king's books at *twelve* pounds per annum only, and actually at that time produced but little more.

Here the Lord opened “ an effectual door, though there were many adversaries” to encounter, and many difficulties to surmount : but he was not easily intimidated in his labours. In the prime of life, in the full possession of his powers, and with an ardent zeal in his Redeemer's cause, he applied himself with all fidelity and diligence to the duties of his function.

Lady Huntingdon having been consulted as to his acceptance of the living, strenuously urged him to take it ; and as a proof of her good wishes and liberality, sent him *five and twenty pounds* to commence with, with promises of her faithful intentions towards him, and earnest prayers for the success of his ministry. The benevolent work was imitated, and his living was considerably increased by subscription.

time was not come," and how has this thought paralyzed my exertions! But, oh! with what tenderness, what unparalleled affection has he reproved my vile ingratitude and unbelief! The light of divine truth has begun to dispel the awful gloom that hung upon this town and the surrounding neighbourhood, and many, lately sunk in ignorance and vice, now press to catch the cheering ray. The dews of heaven have descended on the seed of life, and it has taken root in many hearts. Now the wilderness and the solitary place is glad, the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose, and this hitherto barren spot is converted into a pleasant field of fertility and joy.

"To your Ladyship I am bound to yield unceasing thanks. Your counsels and your prayers have upheld me, have encouraged me, have stimulated me with a holy zeal, a vehement desire to spread the glories of Immanuel's name. O cease not to wrestle with the great Angel of the Covenant, that I may be kept pure from the blood of all men—that no selfish passions mingle with my zeal, to corrupt the simplicity which is in Christ—but that I may be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord—through every vicissitude of life conducting myself as a dying, accountable being, anticipating the awful period when 'the silver cord shall be loosed, when the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and my spirit to God who gave it.'

"Your Ladyship's mentioning my poor ministrations having proved acceptable, gives me courage and makes me confident of success. Greater is he that is for us than all those who shall be against us. Angels and glorified spirits above stand ready to aid our every struggle, and our adorable Master, the great Leader and Commander, speaks in loud and firm accents—'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life: fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God—I will keep thee, I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not.'

"Having enjoyed so many and great blessings whilst under your Ladyship's roof, it would ill become me not to offer my unworthy services whenever your Ladyship is pleased to command them. It will yield me unspeakable pleasure to be an humble instrument in furthering the plan you have in view for the promulgation of the glorious Gospel of the ever-blessed God. Your embassy is an embassy of love; and should our great High Priest smile upon your endeavours—still walk humbly with your God, and yield to him the entire glory of the work.

"Into his everlasting arms I surrender your Ladyship, with my utmost strength of faith and affection.—I honour your faith, which renounces abundance for poverty, and counts not ease, or even life dear, so that you are the means of unfurling the banner of the cross and sending the glad tidings of salvation to people sunk in darkness, and covered with the shadow of death. May the smiles of Him who dwells in Zion attend you in all your ways, and may his grace succeed you in *bringing many sons to glory!*

"With many thanks, heartfelt thanks, for your many acts of kind-

ness, I remain your grateful and very willing servant in the Gospel of Christ,

“THOMAS PENTYCROSS.”

His fame as a Methodist *extraordinary* had now extended itself in every direction; and many people from circumjacent villages, from motives of curiosity or ridicule, were incited to come and hear this wonderful man for themselves; and many, very many, that came to *laugh* went home to *pray*. From one or two villages especially, many families attended regularly, and sat for some years under his ministry; and it was found necessary to erect another gallery, chiefly for their accomodation. To a goodly number the message of life was brought with power to their hearts: and now, through Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, these families and their friends are able to support an interest and maintain a minister among themselves.*

Mr. Pentycross now became a constant preacher in Lady Huntingdon's principal chapels, and maintained an intimate correspondence with her Ladyship to the time of her death. She was much attached to his preaching, and his services were highly acceptable and useful among her different congregations; and, indeed, wherever he went his talents and zeal, his eloquence and piety, commanded esteem.

Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Wallingford arose out of a separation from Mr. Pentycross, which proceeded on doctrinal grounds. Though success followed his labours almost from his first sermon, yet, as there are peculiar seasons “of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,” so Mr. Pentycross found it to be in the course of his ministrations:—the year 1783 was such a season. Successively, Sabbath after Sabbath, one or more were pierced to the heart, convinced of their transgressions, and led to the Saviour. His work was as delightful as his success was astonishing. Many in the town or neighbourhood now felt, and gladly acknowledged, the power of efficacious grace. In alluding to that auspicious period, he once exclaimed in his pulpit—“The glorious year of seventeen hundred and eighty-three will never be forgotten by us through the ages of eternity!”

Elated with his great success, he appears to have indulged himself in some of the vain speculations of what is called, but very improperly, *High Calvinism*, which soon ended in vain disputes that produced a separation.

Patronized by his excellent friend, Lady Huntingdon, and

* Various and frivolous complaints were made against Mr. Pentycross to his diocesan,—such as *crowding* the church, singing of hymns, speaking to the communicants at the Sacrament, &c. After repeated admonitions, the bishop summoned him to give an account of these irregularities; but owing to the representations of an eminent clerical friend, the prelate, after a mild expostulation, granted him all the indulgence he wished to have.

supplied by preachers in her Connexion, the Separatists assembled during the first twelve months in a private house, and at the expiration of that period removed to another private house, in a more convenient situation, which they converted into a chapel, opened in the year 1791, by her Ladyship's chaplain, the Rev. Thomas Wills. The chapel, with the whole freehold estate on which it stood, was purchased by the society, and vested in nine trustees.*

Mr. Pentycross felt reconciled to the separation, judging that if the light of evangelical truth should forsake the Church at his death, many of his hearers would go to the Dissenting meetings.† He himself continued his parochial duties, and became a more consistent, experimental, and scriptural preacher than before his lapse.

After Lady Huntingdon's chapel was opened by Mr. Wills, it continued to be supplied by the ministers and students in her Ladyship's connexion till 1793, when the Rev. J. Boddily, formerly of Walsall, who had received his education at Trevecca, accepted a call to the pastoral office, which he resigned on the 19th of January, 1795, and soon afterwards went to America, and settled as minister of Newbury Port. In the church-book at Wallingford, it is recorded, that the Rev. Joseph Griffiths, another of her Ladyship's students, was called to the discharge of the pastoral duties in that church, by a written instrument, dated the 19th of June, 1798; and was publicly ordained on the 26th of November following. This union promised happiness to the minister and prosperity to the cause of Christ. The following year the old chapel, in which the congregation had wor-

* Just before the chapel was opened, a separation from the newly formed congregation, also under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, took place, principally under the influence of Mr. Lovegrove, an attorney in the town, who had embraced antipædobaptist sentiments; and having erected a chapel on his own estate, continued to preach in it till his death, in November, 1812. The seceders gradually increased, and two respectable congregations were formed.

† These presentiments were verified. His successor was the Rev. Edward Barry, M.D., some time assistant preacher at Fitzroy and Bethel chapels, and chaplain to Dr. Jackson, late Bishop of Kildare. He was the son of an eminent apothecary at Bristol, and in early life enjoyed the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, who admitted him to her college at Trevecca, where he received his education, with a view to become one of her ministers. But on obtaining orders from the Bishop of Man he left Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, and shortly after his induction to the living of St. Mary's, at Wallingford, attacked his former friends in a sermon entitled—“*The friendly Call of Truth and Reason to a new Species of Dissenters, preached before the Archdeacon and Clergy of Berks, at the Visitation at Abingdon.*” Were we in possession of all the particulars which led to such a change in his views, we might possibly account for the *theological errors*, the *defective morality*, the *misrepresentation* of the inhabitants of Wallingford, the *illiberality* towards Dissenters, and the antipathy and violence which are discoverable in the production of Dr. Barry.

shipped, was taken down, and the present building erected. Such was the respect entertained for the character of Mr. Griffiths, that the civic authorities of the town allowed him the use of the Borough-hall for public worship during the whole time the new chapel was building. Mr. Griffiths also carried the Gospel into the populous but neglected village of Benson, where he obtained a place for preaching, which was soon after fitted up in a respectable way as a chapel, and has ever since been held as a preaching station connected with the church at Wallingford.*

The early part of the year 1775 Lady Huntingdon continued at Bath, busily engaged in making preparations for the opening of her chapel in Bristol:—

“The hurry I have been in (says her Ladyship) since I came from Sussex, must excuse me to you. Opening a chapel in Chichester for the Lord, with the business that arises from the amazing increase of our work, allows me little time to indulge myself even in that of the more constant intercourse with my friends.”

In the course of this year FOUR chapels were opened, viz., Bristol, Lewes, Petworth, and Guildford. In the month of July Mr. Toplady arrived at Bath, and preached for a few Sundays in her Ladyship's chapel. As a public speaker he stood eminently distinguished. Never did a man ascend the pulpit with a more serious air, conscious of the momentous work that he was engaged in. His discourses were extemporaneous, delivered in strains of true unadulterated oratory. He had a great variety of talents, such as are seldom seen united in one person: his voice was melodious and affecting; his manner of delivery and action were engaging, elegant, and easy, so as to captivate and fix the attention of every hearer. His explanations were distinct and clear; his arguments strong and forcible; and his exhortations warm and animating; his feelings were so intensely poignant, as to occasion, in some of his addresses, a flow

* Mr. Griffiths resigned his charge at Wallingford in January, 1801, and the chapel was supplied by the ministers in the Connexion, till May, 1804, when Mr. Raban was invited to preach to the people. He was subsequently called to the pastoral office, and publicly ordained over the congregation in October following, on which occasion Mr. Griffiths, the late pastor, Mr. Hinton of Oxford, Mr. Fuller, of Kettering, Mr. Cooke, of Maidenhead, Mr. Douglas, of Reading, and Mr. Lovegrove, of Wallingford, took part in the services of the day, which were afterwards published. Mr. Raban resigned on the 20th of June, 1807; and the August following the Rev. George Lee was invited to fill the vacant pulpit, and continued his ministry with great acceptance, till July, 1812, when he removed to the Tabernacle, at Exeter, and not long after died. While Mr. Lee was at Wallingford, a house was erected for the minister on part of the freehold land which is attached to the chapel. In August, 1812, the Rev. William Harris was invited to supply it for a few weeks. The application was afterwards renewed, and he continued his ministry till October, 1813, when he was ordained over them.

of tears, which, as 'it were, by a sympathetical attraction, have drawn forth a reciprocal sensibility in his auditory. Notwithstanding he was possessed of whatever study and application could impart, or learning, judgment, and genius could combine, we find him estimating all human attainments as of little consequence in divine things, without the effectual agency of the Holy Spirit.

It was the infelicity of Mr. Toplady to have a capacious soaring mind inclosed in a very weak and languid body; yet, this by no means retarded his intense application to study, which was often prolonged until two or three o'clock in the morning. This, and the cold moist air that generally prevails in Devon, which is extremely pernicious to weak lungs, it is more than probable laid the foundation of a consumption which terminated in his death. He endeavoured to exchange his living for another of equivalent value, in some of the midland counties, but could not obtain it. As his strength and health were greatly impaired, he was advised by the faculty to remove to London, which he accordingly did in the year 1775; and, notwithstanding his debilitated frame, continued to preach a number of sermons in the churches for the benefit of public charitable institutions. Having no settled situation in the metropolis, he occasionally assisted Mr. Romaine and Mr. Madan at the Lock; and also frequently preached for Lady Huntingdon at Westminster chapel. It was during this interval that he likewise made excursions to Wales, Brighton, and other places, to preach for her Ladyship. But many of his friends being desirous of receiving the advantages of his ministry, by their pressing solicitation, and from a desire to be useful wherever Divine Providence might lead him, he engaged the chapel belonging to the French Calvinistic Reformed Church, in Orange-street, where he preached twice in the week while his health permitted. Here he had the occasional assistance of many of his brethren, particularly Mr. Madan, Mr. Shirley, Mr. Venn, and Mr. Hill, men of a like spirit with himself, who laboured with singular blessing and success, and many were witnesses of the power with which they spake, being turned from darkness unto light, from the power of Satan unto God. "Mr. Shirley (says he) preached a few evenings since at Orange-street chapel, on Rom. viii. 15, 16. The Lord was eminently with him, and it was a season of peculiar refreshment from above."

Lady Huntingdon was much indisposed at this time, nevertheless she removed to Bristol early in the month of August, accompanied by Lady Anne Erskine, Miss Orton, and Mr. Toplady. Dr. Peckwell and Mr. Glascott soon after arrived in

Bristol, to be present at the dedication of her Ladyship's chapel; and Mr. Toplady took his departure for Brighton, to supply the congregation, who at that time were destitute of a minister. On the 22nd of September he wrote to her Ladyship from thence:—

“ Madam,—Best thanks to your Ladyship for the honour of your much esteemed letter from Bristol, of the 8th instant. You were so ill when I left you there, that the receipt of a letter which carries in it the evident traits of your recovery, was peculiarly welcome, and furnished me with additional matter of thanksgiving to that God who, in mercy to his Church, has been graciously pleased to protract a life so transcendently useful and valuable. It would be far better for your Ladyship to be dissolved, and be with Christ; but it is more needful for his people below that you remain in the body. On their account, may it be very long ere you exchange your coronet for a crown.

“ It would have given me much joy to have been present on a late happy occasion at Bristol; our friends Mr. and Mrs. ———, when they had the honour of waiting on your Ladyship there, presented my message, I suppose, and assigned the reason; I bless the Father of mercies, that the power of the Spirit was experienced, and that he continues to speed your Gospel plough.

“ I have been at this place a week to-day; and mean, if the Lord please, to overstay the first Sunday in October. Here is considerable gathering to the standard of the cross. I have found much union with them, and the unction of the Holy One has given me much comfort and enlargement among them hitherto in our public approaches to God. By a letter from dear Mr. Pentycross, who is now at Chichester, I find, that a new chapel at Petworth, and another at Guildford, are to be opened the first of October. May they receive that true consecration which arises from the presence and power of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. I trust God will enable me and the people here, who are one of the most clearly enlightened, most judicious, most harmoniously united, and most lively congregations I ever was with, to pour out our souls in prayer on that day, for a blessing on your Ladyship's labours of love in general, and on those two encampments in particular.

“ I am informed that Lady Manners' zeal for God has been considerably blessed to many of her neighbours at or near Ealing. She has frequently preaching in her own house; and it seems there is good hope that Lord Robert* himself begins to have the hearing ear and the feeling heart.

“ Has your Ladyship seen the corrected copy of dear Mr. Romaine's

* Lord Robert Manners was the third son of John, second Duke of Rutland, by his second marriage with Lady Lucy Sherrard, sister of Lord Harborough. He sat in several Parliaments for Kingston-upon-Hull, of which town and citadel he was Lieutenant-Governor. He was Colonel of the third regiment of Dragoons; and advanced to the rank of General in 1772. His Lordship married Miss Digges, of Roehampton, in Surrey, and died May 31st, 1782, at his house in Grosvenor-square. They had three sons (one of whom was several times member for the town of Cambridge), and two daughters. In the memoirs of the Rev. Richard Morris, late pastor of the Baptist Church, Amer-

Treatise on Psalmody? If you have you must have perceived that the very exceptionable passages, which laid that great and good man open to much just reprehension, are happily expunged. I asked him for a copy soon after my arrival in London; he answered, that in its present state, he did not acknowledge it for his; but I should have one as soon as published. He was as good as his word, and shortly after gave me his book. I examined it very carefully; and find that the faulty pages have been cancelled. We now no longer read of Watts's Hymns being Watts's Whims, nor of the Holy Spirit's being present where the Psalms are sung. I am glad that my valuable friend was under the necessity of striking out these and such violent and unguarded positions. I never met with so much as one spiritual person who did not censure them most severely; but as he has been so humble and just to truth as to displace them from his Essay, I hope he will meet with no further slight and mortification on their account.

"God go with your Ladyship into Cornwall, and shine on all your efforts for the glory of his name, and for the transfusion of his salvation into the hearts of sinners. Open your trenches and ply the Gospel artillery; and may it prove mighty, through God, to the demolition of every thought, every error, and every work which exalts itself against the knowledge, the love, and the obedience of Christ. Your affectionate servant in Him,
"A. M. TOPLADY."

Mr. Romaine, in his Essay on Psalmody, gave considerable offence by a slighting mention of Dr. Watts. His friend, Lady Huntingdon, and others, expostulated with him, and it was altered. He was not favoured with a musical ear, and therefore appeared contented with the scream of charity boys, led by a parish clerk, whose inharmonious notes often grated the ears of his congregation. Hymns he would not introduce, but made a selection of psalms. The pulpit at Blackfriars sung a thousand times sweeter than the choir; yet he had a taste for the poetry and music of the hymns sung in Lady Huntingdon's and the Tabernacle Connexion. Mr. Wills, in his funeral sermon, said of him:—

"How have I seen his cheeks glow and his eyes sparkle, when I have heard him repeat in the midst of a sermon, from his pulpit, these sweet words of one of our hymns, which was, as well it might be, a great favourite with him:

" ' Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

sham, Bucks, there is much interesting information relative to Lord and Lady Manners; and a letter from her Ladyship, which places her piety and excellence in a pleasing point of view. She was eminently distinguished for her zeal in the cause of God her Saviour; and, influenced by her, his Lordship was ready to promote the happiness of society, and the best interests of his fellow-men.

When from the dust of earth I rise,
 To claim my mansion in the skies,
 E'en then shall this be all my plea,—
 Jesus hath liv'd and died for me.'"

The enthronement of Sternhold and Hopkins, or Tate and Brady, in our churches, to the exclusion of more edifying compositions, is to be accounted for only by the prevailing fear of innovation, as they are pleased to term it who cry, "The Church, and Sternhold and Hopkins for ever!" So far has prejudice on this point prevailed, that more than one clergyman has been threatened with expulsion for singing a single hymn in their churches. Of late years there has been a great improvement in this matter: and that beautiful hymn of Mr. Perronet's—

"All hail the power of Jesu's name," &c.

has been heard beneath the gothic roof of many an edifice.

Perplexed and distressed by the vexatious conduct of the Presbytery of Edinburgh relative to her chapel, Lady Glenorchy not merely resolved to leave, but actually took measures for leaving Scotland for ever, and arrived at Hawkestone, the seat of Sir Rowland Hill, in the month of October, 1776. From thence, accompanied by her friend, Miss Hill, she proceeded to Bath, where she saw, for the first time, an eminent popular preacher, who promised to meet her at Exeter, and act as her chaplain wherever she fixed her abode. Lady Huntingdon was in Wales at this time, and Mr. Toplady was supplying the chapel at Bath. Through the kindness of Miss Hill he was introduced to Lady Glenorchy, whose society he enjoyed during her short stay. Her Ladyship's manners were polite, elegant, and dignified; her person was to the last agreeable, and in her youth must have been handsome. She was naturally endowed with talents far above mediocrity; and these were highly cultivated and improved, and brought to bear with full effect on her whole conduct in life. But when she became a recipient of the grace of God, they were rendered subservient to the interests of religion. Her imagination was lively, and her spirits constitutionally gay, on which, perhaps, she laid too severe restraints; and she had a vein of ready wit and pleasantry which gave a delightful air of ease and frankness to her conversation. Her piety was unaffected and deep: her views of divine truth clear and distinct; and her attachment to the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel decided, firm, and not to be shaken; her desire to be the instrument of doing good in the world, led her to devote the whole of her life to plans of beneficence, and her whole fortune to their execution; the institutions, which remain to this day, shew that her views of usefulness had been by her extended be-

yond her abode upon earth. But what, perhaps, forms the most striking feature in her character, is the proof she has given of the efficacy of true religion to resist the mighty snares and temptations of high rank, great fortune, and powerful worldly influence and friends; no one of these, nor all of them combined, although employed with all their subtlety and all their powers, ever shook her fidelity to God and religion; and it is a proof to those in high life what may be done for the cause of Christ, if there be integrity, in the midst of the most unfavourable circumstances, for such, for one half of her religious life, were those of Lady Glenorchy.

Lord Breadalbane's first wife was Lady Amabella de Grey, daughter and co-heiress of Henry Duke of Kent. The issue of this marriage was Henry, who died a few weeks after his mother, at Copenhagen, where Lord Breadalbane was then in the capacity of ambassador from the British Court, and Lady Jemima de Grey, who, upon the death of her brother, succeeded him under the title of Baroness Lucas, of Crudwell, and Marchioness de Grey. The Marchioness was sister-in-law to Lady Glenorchy, and had married Philip Yorke, second Earl of Hardwicke. With these relations Lady Glenorchy always lived on the very best terms; they were at this period in Bath with their daughters, Amabel, created Countess de Grey, and Lady Mary Jemima, afterwards Lady Grantham. Being invited by Lady Glenorchy, they accompanied her to Lady Huntingdon's chapel to hear Mr. Toplady, with whose preaching they were so much pleased, that they became constant attendants on his ministry during the remainder of his stay at Bath. When speaking of Lady Glenorchy, in one of his letters to Lady Huntingdon, Mr. Toplady says:—

“Through the kindness of our excellent friend, Miss Hill, I had the pleasure of an introduction to Lady Glenorchy, of whose piety, good sense, refined manners, and general information, I have a very high opinion. We spoke much of your Ladyship, and she expressed her deepest obligations for the spiritual advantages she enjoyed from her intimate acquaintance with you. (She will be a brilliant star in your crown, and eclipse many of those who shall be your joy and crown of rejoicing in the last great day. Her Ladyship's relations, Lord Hardwicke and the Marchioness de Grey, have been to the chapel several times, and have expressed themselves pleased with what they saw and heard. His Lordship is a literary man, and we had some agreeable conversation, having spent an evening in company with him at Lady Glenorchy's.”

After paying a visit to Mrs. Tredway, the Lady of Clement Tredway, Esq., many years Member of Parliament for Wells, Lady Glenorchy and her fellow traveller, Miss Hill, proceeded

to Exeter, where she met with Mr. Holmes, a gentleman of a congenial spirit to her own, and to whom she had a letter of introduction from his intimate friend, Mr. Toplady. Mr. Holmes had been, in his youth, a merchant trading to Lisbon, and early in life had acquired an ample fortune. He had now, however, retired from business, and was the kind and generous friend of every good man who happened to be brought within the sphere of his notice, and the munificent patron of every work of piety and charity. His house was made by him and his excellent lady the welcome home of every approved minister of the Gospel who passed through their city, where they found every thing that could delight a well-informed and well-disposed mind.

It was at the residence of Mr. Holmes that Lady Glenorchy met, for the first time, the Rev. Thomas Snell Jones, one of Lady Huntingdon's students, who had been sent by her to Plymouth, where he had been residing for two years and a half as assistant to the Rev. Andrew Kinsman, at the Tabernacle. A few years after, this gentleman became minister to her Ladyship's chapel in Edinburgh. From Exeter Lady Glenorchy and Miss Hill went to Exmouth, on account of the warmth of the climate and the salubrity of the air; and having a preacher with her who was distinguished for his popularity and zeal, a congregation was collected. She soon after procured a house, which she had fitted up as a chapel, in which a congregation of some hundreds was speedily gathered: this place has been eminently useful, and continues to be so to the present time. It was occasionally supplied by the ministers in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion; Mr. Wills preached there in 1781, and was remarkably well received.

In the summer of 1777 Mr. Venn made another journey to Bath to supply the chapel of the Countess. Being in London early in June, he preached for Mr. Toplady, at Orange-street chapel, as he usually did whenever he visited the metropolis. His health had declined so rapidly, and his disorder had increased to such an alarming degree, that the possibility of his recovery, without a miracle, was now universally doubted:—

“Since I have been laid by (says he) many of God's ministers have made me greatly their debtors by preaching to my dear people at Orange-street. Among these, I am under very particular obligations to our beloved Mr. Shirley, who has, on several memorable occasions, been enabled to dispense the word with power and with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Mr. Venn has also preached for me, and God was with him of a truth! he is a first-rate messenger of Christ. It rejoices my heart to hear that he is going to devote some

months to those precious hills in Zion which God has made your Ladyship the instrument of raising."

Mr. Toplady's letter is dated June 11, 1777; and we find Mr. Venn writing to his son* on the 18th of the same month, from Bath, where he had arrived, with Mrs. Venn, a few days previous:—

"My prayer (says he) before we set out, and every day is, that we may receive good to our souls; and already I have received an answer. In these parts I see great monuments of the rich and tender love of our ever-blessed Saviour. Captain Scott and his lady, who set out in the way of glory long, long after me, how have they got beyond me! He said to me the other day, 'It was worth while for us to come to Bristol, if it had been only to suffer as we have done, under the kind hand of our Lord: for now we can tell of his faithfulness and consolations, which we related before upon heresay.' His beloved wife was two months at the point of death; and he has been cut for a cancer, the disease which killed his father. Dear Mr. Fletcher, who is sinking under a painful disease, accosted me thus:—'I love His rod! How gentle are the stripes I feel! how heavy those I deserve!' A third witness, a lady, who by excruciating pain has lost one eye, yet still continues in her affliction, told me that she found, at the foot of the cross, patience and victory over all; though she suffered more than she was able to express. Everlasting praise be given unto the Lord of all Lords for such invaluable supports! Here are the faith and patience of the saints! here the power of Christ! What an office are you training for, my dear son! to publish that Saviour whose love can thus make bitter sweet, and give songs to our poor afflicted fellow-creatures in the dark night of severest sufferings.

"O! for His love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak!"

Mr. Fletcher's health has been declining much for some time, as appears by sundry passages in his letters to his friends. Some time before this he says to Mr. Ireland, "Oh, how life goes! I walked, now I gallop into eternity! The bowl of life goes rapidly down the steep hill of time. Let us be wise; embrace we Jesus and the resurrection. Let us trim our lamps, and continue to give ourselves to him that bought us, till we can do it without reserve." The frequent journeys which he took to and from Trevecca, while he presided over Lady Huntingdon's College, in all weathers and in all seasons of the year, greatly impaired the firmness of his constitution. A violent cough, accompanied by spitting of blood, determined him to remove to Bristol to try the hot-well water. It would seem, however, that

* The late Rev. John Venn, of Clapham.

he reaped little or no benefit from it, and on his return to Madley, his disorder increasing rather than abating, Mr. Ireland by the advice of a physician, wisely recommended his going, as soon as convenient, to the south of France and Switzerland, as the most likely means to restore him. Mr. Fletcher, however, would not then consent to go; and some time after removed to Stoke Newington, where he had the advice of the most eminent physicians that London could afford. But all proved ineffectual to restore him, and Sir John Elliot, his principal medical attendant, advised that he should again have recourse to the Bristol waters. Accordingly, Mr. and Mrs. Ireland took him to their house at Brislington, near Bristol, for that purpose, and he was there a few weeks at the period that Mr. Venn arrived in Bath.

Mr. Venn remained some weeks in Bath, and his ministry was attended by great crowds:—

“Dear Mr. Venn (says Lady Huntingdon) has been labouring most successfully at Bath, to overflowing congregations. Captain Scott and Mr. Fletcher have been there, and heard him preach in the chapel. The latter is far gone in a consumptive disorder, but is alive to God, and ripening fast for glory. We have exchanged several letters lately. As a last resource, he is to accompany Mr. Ireland to the south of France. May the grace, mercy, and love of our great Intercessor accompany them, and abide with them wherever they go.”

From Bath Mr. Venn removed to Brislington, on a visit to his excellent friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ireland. Whilst there he had many opportunities of examining the character and disposition of the apostolic vicar of Madley. The testimony of Mr. Venn is the more valuable, as there were several points of doctrine in which he differed from Mr. Fletcher; and he felt himself a good deal interested in the support of several of those tenets which Mr. Fletcher publicly opposed. But difference of opinion on points respecting which good men probably never will be all agreed on earth, could not close the eyes of the great and good Mr. Venn against the extraordinary excellencies of Mr. Fletcher, and therefore he spake of him with all the rapture and affection which pre-eminent graces will always excite in the breast of a true Christian. Making mention of Mr. Fletcher to a brother clergyman, he exclaimed—

“Sir, he was a luminary—a *luminary* did I say?—he was a *sun*! I have known all the great men for these fifty years, but I have known none like him. I was intimately acquainted with him, and was under the same roof with him once for six weeks, during which time I never heard him say a single word which was not proper to be spoken, and which had not a tendency to minister grace to the hearers. One time,

meeting him when he was very ill of a hectic fever, which he had brought upon himself by his intense labours in the ministry, I said, 'I am sorry to find you so ill.' Mr. Fletcher answered with the greatest sweetness,—'Sorry Sir, why are you sorry? It is the chastisement of my heavenly Father, and I rejoice in it. I love the rod of my God, and rejoice therein as an expression of his love and affection towards me.' "

Mr. Venn, being asked whether Fletcher might not have been imprudent in carrying his labours to such an excess, answered, "His heart was in them, and he was carried on with an impetus which could not be resisted. He did not look on the work of the ministry as a mere duty, but it was his pleasure and delight. Tell a votary of pleasure that his course of life will impair his health and property, and finally ruin him; he will reply that he knows all this, but he must go on; for life would not be tolerable without his pleasures!" Such was the ardour of Mr. Fletcher in the ministry of the Gospel—he could not be happy but when employed in his great work.

An observation having escaped a gentleman in company with Mr. Venn which seemed to bear hard upon a particular body of Christians, he gave a solemn caution against evil-speaking in these words:—"Never did I hear Mr. Fletcher speak ill of any man—he would pray for those that walked disorderly, but he would not publish their faults."

On the 10th of May, 1780, Lady Glenorchy wrote to her friend, Miss Hill, informing her that Lord Hopetoun had given his daughter, Lady Henrietta Hope, permission to accompany her to England, without restricting them either to time or the places which they might visit, and that she intended to be at Hawkestone in her way home. Accordingly, on the 17th of May, these two friends left Edinburgh for London; on the 27th they reached that city, just at the moment when the opposition against Spafields Chapel was at its height. Lady Huntingdon was then in London, and received Lady Glenorchy and Lady Henrietta Hope with the utmost cordiality and friendship. Not long after her arrival Lady Glenorchy was taken alarmingly ill, and the most eminent physician of the day pronounced her complaint to be a gout in the head and stomach. From this she was never afterwards completely free. By the 28th of June she was so far recovered as to be able to leave town and set out for Exmouth. There she found the chapel which she had formerly fitted up, and in the welfare of which she was so much interested, in a very prosperous condition. At her request the chapel was then supplied by the ministers and students in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. After paying a

visit to her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, at their country residence near Exeter, she repaired to Bath, where her stay was short, and proceeding to Hawkestone, returned by Buxton to Scotland in the month of August.

Having promised Lady Huntingdon to return to Bath for the winter, hoping the change might be beneficial to her health, Lady Glenorchy again left Scotland on the 23rd of November, and arrived there on the 9th of December, about ten days before Lady Huntingdon came thither. A few months previous some serious persons belonging to her Ladyship's chapel, not approving of the forms of the Established Church, had formed themselves into a body for public worship, according to the Dissenting mode; but in consequence of the fewness of their number and the opposition they encountered, they with difficulty maintained the cause for four years, when Thomas Welsh, Esq., of London, and some other Independents, exerted themselves in their favour, and engaged to look out for a suitable pastor for them. On Lady Glenorchy's arrival in Bath it was her intention to unite with this newly formed church, being herself a Presbyterian, but the place of meeting was then shut up, and she joined in worship in Lady Huntingdon's chapel, and received much edification:—

“ On arriving at Bath (says her Ladyship) I was much disappointed at finding the Dissenting meeting-house shut up, as there was no other place of worship that I could attend with satisfaction but Lady Huntingdon's chapel, and I was not clear about uniting with them in the Lord's Supper. I went there on Christmas-day, with the disposition to come away at the beginning of the communion service. When the clergyman, however, gave the invitation to all who were sincerely and devoutly disposed to come and partake of the ordinance, I asked myself, if I durst refuse? Here was a company of devout worshippers assembled to show forth the Lord's death—the Lord's presence, according to his promise, was to be expected. Why, being invited, should I decline to join them? Was I more holy than they? By no means: perhaps the most unworthy there. Was it the form? This was not a sufficient reason to neglect the Lord's command, and especially as I had no opportunity of obeying it elsewhere; and, moreover, the Lord looks upon the heart, and not the attitude of the body. I thought myself a believer; I was desired as such to unite. The question was, durst I refuse? I found I could not. I therefore staid and partook of the ordinance with more than usual comfort. My heart was dissolved with love and joy in believing the great and glorious things held forth; it was broken under a sense of sin, and the grace of a pardoning God. My affections were drawn forth in an unusual manner at the table, insomuch that it was with difficulty I refrained from crying aloud. My faith was strengthened; I was enabled to receive a whole Christ to save me from the guilt and power of sin, and to sanctify and

glorify my soul. I came home rejoicing, and my heart more enlarged towards his people of all denominations; and confirmed in the opinion, that a Catholic spirit is acceptable to God."

On the first day of the year she again joined in celebrating the Lord's Supper at Lady Huntingdon's chapel, and experienced much comfort from the exhortation to the communicants, especially from what Mr. Pentycross said upon the sanctification of the heart:—

"I was conscious (says Lady Glenorchy) that I desired to put off the body of sin, and longed to be holy as God is holy. I went in the evening and heard Mr. Taylor, from Psalm cvi. 4, 'Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation.' It was a profitable discourse: may the Lord enable me to follow the exhortations given in it."

Just at this period an event took place which added much to the comfort of Lady Glenorchy's after life. On the death of the Earl of Hopetoun, in the beginning of this year, his numerous family, as is usual on such occasions, were dispersed. His eldest daughter, Lady Henrietta, soon after went to London, to which place Lady Glenorchy, who was then at Bath, hastened to meet her. From this time Lady Henrietta constantly took up her abode with Lady Glenorchy, and commonly accompanied her wherever she went. They were of one heart, and of one mind in all things, and united in promoting every work of faith, and labour of love. To Lady Glenorchy she was a most valuable acquisition. With a happy temper and high accomplishments, she was distinguished for sagacity and prudence, talents which she inherited from her father. Perhaps the sympathies of these two friends were excited and strengthened by their extremely delicate state of health.

Lady Huntingdon's stay in London was short, for she returned to Bristol, and from thence to Bath, in the month of March. Not long after this, Lady Huntingdon left Bath, and Lord and Lady Dartmouth arrived there. Lady Glenorchy's mind was much discomposed by various occurrences which had of late perplexed her; she was likewise seized with a very violent illness, which detained her six weeks longer than she originally intended to have remained in Bath. Under these circumstances she received a letter from Lady Huntingdon, which was much blessed as the means of delivering her soul from spiritual disease, and quickening her views of invisible and eternal things. Her Ladyship's reply to Lady Huntingdon develops the state of her feelings at this time:—

"My dear Madam,—I am unwilling to give you the trouble of reading many unprofitable letters from me; yet as Miss Godde has offered

to be the bearer of one, I take this opportunity of returning my most grateful thanks for your Ladyship's kind and instructive letter, which I hope the Lord has already blessed to my poor murmuring soul, by comforting me under my present state of ignorance of His will concerning me, and showing me that I must, like a little child, submit to be taught many things I do not now understand the meaning of, and wait his time for unfolding those things that appear to me mysterious. I now find that it is indeed very difficult to *stand still* and see the salvation of God. I wish to be running to do a thousand things in my own spirit, and need to be often taught that the Lord has pre-ordained the works he would have me walk in.

"Miss Godde will inform you of all that has happened here since you left us. Lord and Lady Dartmouth have been near a week in Bath, and go away to-morrow. They were much pleased with Mr. Sheppard yesterday, who preached very well in the morning, and likewise in the afternoon. I propose going next week to Staffordshire, where I hope, through Miss Hill's means, to see Captain Scott and perhaps Mr. Fletcher. It appears to me very clear that the Lord has brought me here, and kept me here, to get acquainted with his *own* people, and to teach me many things from seeing them, and living among them, that I never could so well have learned in my retirement. I cannot help mentioning to your Ladyship how much I think of your clerk, Mr. Wills. He is indeed a faithful creature, and has been very kind to me in speaking sweetly for half an hour two days ago, when he was here about business. I happened to be very low when he came, and it seemed as if the Lord had sent him on purpose to help and comfort me. He has kept several meetings which I have found particularly sweet and useful.

"I will not now detain your Ladyship any longer than by repeating what I at all times feel, that I am, my very dear and honoured Madam, your much obliged and most affectionate servant,

"W. GLENORCHY."

The congregation assembling in Argyle Chapel, Bath, originated, as already stated, in the cessation of a few pious individuals who formed themselves into a church on Independent principles. The first person to whom application was made to preside over this infant church was the Rev. Thomas Tuppen, who had been a preacher in Mr. Whitefield's Connexion, and afterwards minister of the Tabernacle at Portsea. He arrived in Bath in 1785, when the interest rapidly increased: from about twenty-five persons, who at first attended him, the number rose in a few years to seven or eight hundred. The place in which they worshipped being now too small for the congregation, a new chapel was begun in 1789: and opened October 4, 1790; but Mr. Tuppen's health was then so much reduced, that he was never able to preach a single sermon there; he could only attend the services of the day, which were performed by the

Rev. William Jay, who has been the minister of the place ever since.

During the few years that Mr. Tuppen exercised his ministry at Bath, his manner of preaching was very striking: he was often heard to say, "If the attention be gained, half the business is done." It was never his wish to empty other places where the Gospel was preached, in order to fill his own; for, after observing the largeness of his own audience, he would often enquire whether the other places were full. When he was answered in the affirmative, he seemed to be much pleased; and would say, "Well, we may now hope something is doing!" After a lingering illness, which he supported with great resignation and patience, he entered into his rest on the 22nd of February, 1791, aged forty-eight.

Her Ladyship's chapel at this period was principally supplied by Mr. Wills, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Glascott, Mr. Pentycross, Mr. Piercy, Dr. Sheppard, and Mr. Bradford. This latter gentleman was of Wadham College, Oxford, and curate of Frelsham, in Berkshire. Soon after he began to preach the Gospel, he was invited to Bath by Lady Huntingdon, where he attempted, for the first time, to preach without notes:—

"On my return (says he) from Bath, I found the Church shut against me, and a letter from Lady Huntingdon, from whom I afterwards received many favours, and more spiritual edification than from all the books I ever read, or from all the preaching or conversation I ever heard."

Lady Huntingdon spent a considerable portion of the year 1782 at Bath. Dr. Edward Sheppard was then a resident there, and a frequent preacher at the chapel for many years. In September and October of this year Mr. Wills and Mr. Pentycross laboured alternately with great utility to the cause of God; for their services were not hasty productions, but filled with solid good sense and well-digested sentiment, expressed in a style pleasing to the man of science, yet perfectly intelligible to the more illiterate, and were well calculated to inform the ignorant, to alarm the careless and secure, to comfort and edify the saint, and to make the sinner in Zion tremble:—

"Dear Mr. Wills and Mr. Pentycross (says her Ladyship) have left a mighty blessing behind them, in the many awakened and truly converted souls, the fruits of their honest labours among us. Blessed be God for such faithful men; O that He would send forth many, very many more *such* labourers into this plenteous harvest!"

And to Mr. Wills, not long after his departure from Bath, she says:—

"It must comfort you and my dearest niece, that you left a blessing

behind you. Much rejoicing abides still with us, and dear Mr. Pentycross keeps exceedingly alive in his own soul, and comforts the many, and causes fear to rest on the multitudes."

Mrs. Pentycross was one of the first fruits of Mr. Pentycross's ministry at Wallingford. In domestic life she was truly affectionate and pious, happily blending much good humour with unaffected seriousness. Lady Huntingdon was always partial to her, and when she was in Bath, for the benefit of her health, sent her a silver tea-pot, as a small token of her affectionate remembrance. The following note accompanied the present:—

"Lady Huntingdon's kindest wishes ever attend Mrs. Pentycross—was glad to find she was so well as to be able to arrive at her lodgings last night, though she fears she will feel the great difference in having left the hospitable roof of her kind friend, Mr. Perry. A small token from Lady Huntingdon she hopes Mrs. Pentycross will accept, to put her in mind how kindly she took her every remembrance of her when absence so justly might have left her so very excusable of every attention that could be due to her. Lady Huntingdon hopes Mrs. Pentycross will not suffer by the change of lodging; and as the air may be better, hopes they may both feel the best effects from it.

"Bath, Feb. 11, 1784."

From this period nothing remarkable occurred in the history of her Ladyship's chapel at Bath. For several successive years it continued to be supplied by Messrs. Shirley, Townsend, Glascott, Wills, Taylor, Piercy, Pentycross, Rowland, Maxfield, Jesse, Jones, and Charles; Drs. Haweis, Sheppard, and Peckwell. For this highly favoured city to be the appointed scene of their exemplary labours, was a truly happy circumstance. Their names will long continue to be had in honour; and from thence many a goodly jewel will be collected to form their crowns of rejoicing in the great day when the chief Shepherd shall appear. Multitudes thronged to hear them; and it was truly delightful to behold the powerful, the resistless effects of the Gospel-words amongst those, who, before that time, had seldom or never heard it proclaimed in its purity. Many despisers were overawed and confounded—many formal professors were touched with the power of true religion—and many careless lovers of pleasure were impressed with a solemn sense of eternal things.

CHAPTER XXXI.

History of the College at Trevecca—Mr. Fletcher appointed President—Letters from Mr. Fletcher—Mr. Glazebrook the first Student—Mr. Easterbrook—Account of Mr. Glazebrook—Letters from Lady Huntingdon to Mr. Glazebrook and Dr. Kirkland—Lady Moira—Letters from Mr. Berridge—Interesting circumstances—Mr. John Jones—First Anniversary of the College—Letter from Lady Huntingdon.

ON the character of its Ministers the prosperity of the Church will at all times greatly depend. That they should be men of talents and piety, which, in the language of the Holy Scriptures, are named gifts and graces, is devoutly to be desired. As to the measure of talents requisite, they should not fall below mediocrity—the higher they rise above it the greater benefit will accrue to the Church. Piety is still more needful: what the Scriptures express by “being born again of the Spirit, believing in Christ, repenting of sin, being sanctified wholly in spirit, in soul, and body, and living to the Lord,” forms an essential part of the character of the man who aspires to the office of a Christian Minister. Education succeeds to prepare them for this peculiar service. Could a greater blessing be wished for the human race, than that it might be regarded as an universal maxim, “that no one should receive an education for the pastoral office who had not first been made a partaker of a divine nature, and known the grace of God in truth.”

When by the preaching of the Apostles and Evangelists, and the Ministers whom they ordained, the Gospel was planted among the nations, all the extraordinary aids for the propagation of it ceased, and every thing was left to the operation of ordinary means, under the divine blessing, as the standing method appointed by the Head of the Church for the advancement of his kingdom in every succeeding age. There is no way of attaining knowledge of any kind, but by the method common to all; and an acquaintance with religion, as well as with science, must be acquired by the vigorous application of the mind to the study of divine truth. A blessing from God on such endeavours is to be expected, and should be implored; but he is guilty of a most dangerous error, who conceives that it will in any degree supersede the necessity of ordinary means.

These remarks are applicable to the Seminary founded by the Countess of Huntingdon for the instruction of candidates

for the Christian ministry. For the supply of her chapels, her Ladyship hitherto confined herself, with but few exceptions, to the Ministers of the Established Church, as her preachers, most of whom accepted her invitation and laboured in the places which she had opened. But her zeal enlarging with her success, and a great variety of persons throughout the kingdom begging her assistance, in London and many of the most populous cities, she purchased, built, or hired chapels for the performance of divine service. As these multiplied, through England, Ireland, and Wales, the Ministers who had before laboured for her Ladyship were unequal to the task, and some unwilling to move in a sphere so extensive, and which began to be branded as *irregular*, and to meet great opposition; yet many persevered in their services when summoned to the work, and were content to bear the cross.

The winter of 1767 Lady Huntingdon spent chiefly at Bath, from whence she wrote frequently to Mr. Fletcher and others relative to the College at Trevecca, and was very active in forming arrangements for the execution of her plan. She proposed to admit only such as were truly converted to God, and resolved to dedicate themselves to his service. They were at liberty to stay there three years, during which time they were to have their education gratis, with every necessary of life, and a suit of clothes once a year; afterwards, those who desired it might enter into the ministry, either in the Established Church of England or among Protestants of any other denomination.

Before her Ladyship entered on this arduous undertaking, her pious mind was desirous to know if there was anything which could be found to favour her plan in the word of God: nor was the enquiry made without receiving ample satisfaction. There were schools of the prophets under the dispensation of the Old Testament, in which young men were trained up in the study of the law of Moses, under the tuition of persons the most eminent and the most favoured of God. Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha, appear to have presided in these seminaries of learning. Many, who have a hypothesis to support, would be greatly delighted if they could produce so respectable authority in its favour. May we not consider this ancient practice as sanctioning similar institutions under the Christian economy?

But there is more than analogy to argue from in support of evangelical seminaries: there is divine authority pronounced in an express injunction. In 2 Tim. ii., 2, the apostle Paul gives him the following charge: "The things which thou hast heard of me before many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Every thing necessary

for Christian schools of education for the ministry, is to be found here. The system to be taught is the Gospel of Jesus Christ—the things which Jesus Christ hath revealed to Paul. The tutor or professor, Timothy, an evangelist, who had himself studied under the apostle Paul, and learned from him, both in public and in private, all those glorious truths which “make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work,” and who had acquired experience in the work of the ministry. The students are described—they must be “faithful men,” true believers in Christ, who display the efficacy of their faith by following the Lord fully; and it probably means too, that they should be men of some eminence in gifts and graces. The term of their course of study is specified; and it is to continue till they be thoroughly instructed, that “they shall be able to teach others.” The foundation is laid by the God of nature, in endowing the student with good abilities and powerful talents; and by the God of grace, in renewing the soul and sanctifying these talents for the service of Christ. On this foundation a course of evangelical instruction, under an eminent and experienced servant of the Redeemer, is reared; and the result is a fitness for the work of the ministry, for which it is intimated that this education will qualify the student of sacred truth. Such is the mode which the Holy Spirit prescribes as the ordinary way of preparing persons for the ministry of the word. We say the *ordinary* way, for where circumstances are such that it cannot be obtained, ministers must do without it. The necessities of the Church may render it proper that men should be ministers who have not enjoyed the advantages of an academical or even a liberal education. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the French Protestants called to the pastoral office the most zealous of their members, and are indebted to those lay-preachers for the continuance of their existence.

From the high opinion which the Countess of Huntingdon had of Mr. Fletcher’s piety, learning, and abilities for such an office, she invited him to undertake the superintendence of the College at Trevecca. Not that he could promise to be generally resident there, much less constantly: his duty to his own flock at Madely would by no means admit of this: but he was to attend as often as he conveniently could; to give advice, with regard to the appointment of masters and the admission and exclusion of students; to revise their studies and conduct, to assist their piety, and judge of their qualifications for the work of the ministry. As Mr. Fletcher greatly approved of the design, especially considering, first, that none were to be admitted but such as feared and loved God; and secondly, that

when they were prepared for it, they were to be at liberty to enter into the ministry, whenever providence should open a door; he readily complied with the invitation, and undertook the charge. This he did without fee or reward, from the sole motive of being useful in the most important work of training up persons for the glorious office of preaching the Gospel.

When the plan for the examination of the young men who might appear proper candidates for admission into the College was drawn up, and approved of by Mr. Romaine, Mr. Venn, Mr. Wesley, and others, it was forwarded by Lady Huntingdon to all those ministers with whom she had any acquaintance or connexion, requesting them to assist her in the choice of such persons as might be suitable for the Christian ministry. Mr. Fletcher being favoured with a copy of the plan, some time after sent her Ladyship the following reply, which throws considerable light on the early history of the late Mr. Glazebrook and the College at Trevecca, for which he was most probably the *first* candidate proposed:—

“ Madely, 24th Nov. 1767.

“ My dear Lady—I have received the proposals which your Ladyship has drawn up for the examination of the young men who may appear proper candidates for the Trevecca academy, and gratefully acknowledge your kindness in allowing me to propose suitable subjects out of my parish. Our Israel is small, my Lady, and if among six hundred thousand, only two faithful men were found of old, the Joshuas and Calebs cannot be numerous among us. After having perused the articles and looked round about me, I designed to answer your Ladyship, that *out of this Galilee ariseth no prophet*. With this resolution I went to bed, but in my sleep was much taken up with the thought and remembrance of one of my young colliers, who told me some months ago, that for four years he had been inwardly persuaded he should be called to speak for God. I looked upon the unusual impression of my dream as a call to speak to the young man, and at waking designed to do so at the first opportunity. To my great surprise he came to Madely that very morning, and I found upon enquiry that he had been as much drawn to come, as I to speak to him. This encouraged me to speak to him of your Ladyship’s design; and I was satisfied, by his conversation, that I might venture to propose him to your Ladyship for further examination. His name is *James Glazebrook*, collier and getter of iron-stone in Madely Wood. He is now twenty-three—by look nineteen; he has been awakened seven years; he has been steady from the beginning of his profession, at least so far as to be kept outwardly unblameable, but seemed to me to walk mostly in heaviness. What I told him was as oil put into a glimmering lamp, and he seems to revive upon hearing of the little outward call. Notwithstanding his strong desire to exhort, he never attempted it yet, and his not being forward to run of himself, makes me have the better

hope his call is from God. He hath no mean gift in singing and prayer, his judgment and sense are superior to his station, and he does not seem (at least in the prospect) to be discouraged by the severest part of your Ladyship's proposals. One difficulty stood in the way: he maintains by his labour his aged mother, but this is made easy by his mother's leave, and the promise of an elder son to maintain her, if he can but have his brother's place in the pit.

"With regard to the superintendency of the College, or the examination of the candidates, I know myself too well to dream about it: nevertheless, so far as my present calling and poor abilities will allow, I am ready to throw my mite into the treasury that your Ladyship may find in other persons.

"Some of our conversations upon the manifestations of the Son of Man to the heart have led me into many an hour's consideration. The Holy Ghost alone can clear up the points to pursue. Nevertheless, I have found both comfort and profit in setting upon paper the reflections I have been enabled to make upon the mysterious subject; and they have, through mercy, set my soul more than ever against the rampant errors of Sandemanianism. Should providence ever favour me with an opportunity, I would bespeak an hour of your Ladyship's time, to ratify my views of the point, under God.

"I am happily provided with a schoolmaster to my mind, and my ministry is the last under which I would advise any one intended for a preacher to sit. Nevertheless, if the young candidate* (Mr. Eastwood) mentioned in the letter wants retirement and a prophet's room at my house, he may have it, if he can cook for himself, or find a table in the neighbourhood. "J. FLETCHER."

Mr. Glazebrook was the first fruit of Mr. Fletcher's indefatigable labours at Madely, and he had much pleasure in watching the growth of grace in the heart of this youthful servant of Christ. From a very early period of life he was of a remarkably witty and satirical turn of mind; and not being under much control from the impressions of religion, there was so little bar to its full exercise, that he has been heard to say, that before he was sixteen years of age he was the terror of the whole neighbourhood where he lived. The reader will make his own reflections upon the extreme danger and impropriety of an uncontrolled indulgence of such a disposition. Mr. Glazebrook retained through life a propensity to humour and satire, and something of the kind is observable in many of his writings.

* Mr. Jonas Eastwood was patronized by Lady Huntingdon, and afterwards took orders in the Established Church. He was one of the body of Evangelical clergymen to whom Mr. Wesley addressed his celebrated letter on the subject of an open and avowed union between all who preach the fundamental truths of the Gospel. Where he was situated, or at what time he finished his course, we have not been able to learn. Previous to the year 1760 he had filled the office of classical tutor of Kingswood school, and was a member of the Wesleyan Connexion.

It is acknowledged and lamented in the preface to his treatise on Extemporary Preaching; and whenever he found a youth possessed of this talent, he never failed to guard him against indulging it with too much freedom. He would assure him that it required a strong restraint, without which it was liable to become extremely dangerous and often mischievous.

The uncommon zeal, unaffected piety, the simplicity and politeness of Mr. Fletcher's manners, together with his primitive method of stating and enforcing the great truths of the Gospel, soon attracted the notice of young Glazebrook. It is certain that no abilities or qualifications of the minister can be sufficient of themselves to convert a sinner to God. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God who giveth the increase. Nevertheless, the great Head of the Church often displays his wisdom in raising up the most suitable instruments for accomplishing his purposes of mercy. The word of truth came with such power to the heart of this young man that he entered with spirit into the profession of serious religion: his wit became consecrated; and his zeal and abilities, which in any situation could not be concealed, soon brought him acquainted with the vicar, and he received great assistance in his religious progress from the private admonitions and instructions of that faithful and zealous pastor.

Mr. Glazebrook was a man that never appeared in disguise. There was a frankness and openness in his manner which at once discovered the sincerity of his heart. Having felt the power of religion in his own soul, he most earnestly desired to rescue others of his fellow creatures from destruction; and he mentioned this desire with that undisguised freedom, and at the same time respectful prudence, for which through life he was always remarkable. Mr. Fletcher stated to him the vast importance of the ministerial office, and the improbability of his obtaining such a stock of learning as would enable him to discharge it with credit to himself, or usefulness to the Church of Christ. Yet he advised him neither to suppress this desire altogether, nor to encourage it, but earnestly to apply to God for that wisdom which is profitable to direct on so important an occasion.

Not long after this, the providence of God, in the establishment of Lady Huntingdon's College, opened a door for Mr. Glazebrook's admission into the office of the ministry, in a way that excited his utmost gratitude. He entered Trevecca among the first, if not *the very first Student*. As early as January 1768, we find Mr. Fletcher appointed Master or President, and the Rev. Joseph Easterbrook, afterwards vicar of the parish of Temple,

in the city of Bristol, assistant. In a letter to her Ladyship, dated January 3, 1768, Mr. Fletcher says:—

“ My Lady—A thousand thanks to your Ladyship for the letter you were so kind as to favour me with ; it relieved me in a great measure from the fears I had concerning your health. Blessed be our God who spares you to see the beginning of a new year, and to fill up the space of it with inward acts of faith and love towards Him who did not abhor the virgin’s womb, and outward attempts to promote every where the savour of his knowledge. May the Child born, and the Son given, show himself more abundantly than ever to be *wonderful* in his works and ways, and with regard to your Ladyship’s soul and projects. May you find him turning this year into a Christian jubilee wherever his providence shall direct your steps ; and may your very enemies be forced to confess that *the Mighty God* and *the Prince of Peace* is your sun, shield, and exceeding great reward ! What this year may bring forth who knows ? This, however, we know—all will be welcome that he shall be pleased to appoint ; and nothing will befall us but by his appointment, for the very hairs of our head are numbered. With what angelic peace and martyr-like intrepidity ought this consideration to inspire us ! Oh, for more faith to persevere, as seeing the Invisible, as carrying this Saviour in arms of love with the sensibility of exulting Simeon ! I am, through mercy, in some feeble manner penetrated with a sense of the necessity of abandoning myself to the holy child Jesus, as a worthless mite towards the reward of his humiliation. If the Word was made flesh ; if the Most High exchanged his throne for a manger, his heaven for a stable, and his transcendent majesty for the apparent feebleness of an infant ; good God, into what an abyss of shame and humility should I plunge myself ! Methinks, if my eyes were truly opened to see this mystery of godliness, I should instantly be dissolved into tears of astonishment and love. Oh, pray for me, insensible me, that the Holy Ghost may teach me to sound the depths of incarnate love, or at least to lose myself in their immensity, together with your Ladyship. It is an ocean without bottom : may we fall into it every moment, as insignificant drops of gall, to be absorbed in those pure and mighty waters. There the mountains of our iniquities and the valleys of our deficiencies are more effectually covered than the highest mountains were by the waters of the flood. Our temptations, transgressions, losses, and pains are lost here like drops or showers in the sea. We are in this sea : it fills heaven and earth ; and if we meet now and then in it with a dash against the rock of adversity, or a storm from the boisterous winds of temptations, it is only to make our scum go from us, as Isaiah says. Welcome, then, even contrary winds ; they are, in reality, favourable. Some will, no doubt, blow upon your Ladyship from that little point of the compass, Trevecca ; but the Lord hath them in his hands ; fear not, the government is still upon his shoulder.

“ I thank your Ladyship for having recommended to me Easterbrook ; I hope he will be the captain of the school, and a great help to the master, as well as a spur to the students. He hath good parts, a most

happy memory, and a zeal that would gladden your Ladyship's heart. He has preached no less than four times to-day; and seems, indeed, in his own element when he is seeking after the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He is employed every evening in the work of the Lord; and I give him the more opportunity to exercise his talent, as it appears he does it far better than I. I beg two things for him: first, that it may hold; secondly, that he may be kept humble. He would at first live upon potatoes and water; but finding it may impair his health, I have got him to table with me, and shall gladly pay his board: he works for me, and the workman is worthy of his hire.

"Our young collier seems a little discouraged with regard to the hopes of his being admitted one of your students: he thinks he stands no chance, if all must be qualified as he is. With regard to books, I am in doubt what to write to your Ladyship. Having studied abroad (Geneva), and used rather foreign than English books with my pupils, I am not acquainted with the books Great Britain affords, well enough to select the *best* and most *concise*. Besides, a plan of studies must be fixed upon first, before proper books can be chosen. Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, with Ecclesiastical History, and a little Natural Philosophy, and Geography, with a great deal of practical divinity, will be sufficient for those who do not care to dive into languages. Mr. Townsend and Charles Wesley might, by spending an hour together, make a proper choice, and I would recommend them not to forget Watts's Logic and his History of the Bible by questions and answers, which seem to me excellent books of the kind for clearness and order. Mr. Wesley's Natural Philosophy contains as much as is wanted, or more. Mason's Essay on Pronunciation will be worth their attention. Henry and Gill on the Bible, with the four volumes of Baxter's practical works, Keach's Metaphors, Taylor on the Types (printed at Trevecca), Gurnal's Christian Armour, Edwards on Preaching, Johnson's English Dictionary, and Mr. Wesley's Christian Library, may make part of the little library. The book of Baxter I mention I shall take care to send to Trevecca, as a mite towards the collection, together with Usher's Body of Divinity, Scapula's Greek Lexicon, and Lyttleton's Latin Dictionary.

"With regard to those who propose to learn Latin and Greek, the master your Ladyship will appoint may choose to follow his particular method. Mr. Wesley's books, printed for the use of Christian youths, seem to me short and proper, and their expense less, which I suppose should be consulted. Two or three dictionaries of Bailey or Dyke, for those who learn English, with two or three Coles's Dictionaries, Schrevelius's, and Pasore's, for those who will learn Latin and Greek, may be a sufficient stock at first.

"The woman I mentioned died as happy, I trust, as I described her: but she remained speechless some days, through the violence of her disorder. Another I buried the same week, who died as triumphant as Mr. Janeway. God prepare us for that solemn change! Mr. Easterbrook joins me in duty to your Ladyship. We have rejoiced greatly together at the opening made by the death of Lord Buchan for the spread of the Gospel: may many enter in at that door, and

especially all the relations he hath left behind. Mr. James Stillingfleet is presented, by Mr. Hill, to the living of Shawbury, eight miles from Shrewsbury and twenty from here. I thank the Lord for this fellow-helper. My Christian respects wait upon all that love Jesus about your Ladyship. I am your Ladyship's unworthy servant,

"J. FLETCHER."

As Mr. Glazebrook was the *first student proposed*, and most probably the *first that entered* the College at Trevecca, we shall crave the indulgence of the reader whilst we briefly detail some further particulars of his history. Whilst at Trevecca, he was distinguished equally by his superior abilities and his uncommon application. During his residence there he allowed himself but little time either for recreation, refreshment, or rest. After confining himself closely to his studies the greater part of the day, he would frequently consume several hours of the night in noting down whatever had occurred in the course of his reading worthy of observation. His piety was equally remarkable with his attainments. As labourers were wanting, he was soon sent forth, and his preaching was attended with very considerable success. Her Ladyship appointed him to serve several places in England, where his ministry was much owned. But disliking an itinerant life, he applied to his noble patroness to procure him orders in the Established Church. With the assistance of Mr. Fletcher a title was obtained, and in December, 1771, he was ordained deacon, by Dr. Brownlow North, afterwards Bishop of Winchester, who had then been newly appointed to the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry.*

Soon after his ordination, Mr. Glazebrook entered on the curacy of Smisby, in Derbyshire; after which he served the curacies of Rowley Regis, near Birmingham; Shawbury, in Shropshire; Ravenstone, in Derbyshire; and Hugglescote, in Leicestershire. He continued several years in deacon's orders, though with much inconvenience to himself, owing to the circumstance of an inconsiderate removal from his first curacy within the year; and it was not till the year 1777 that he was ordained

* This youthful prelate, then only *thirty* years of age, was the second son of Lord Guildford, who had married the near relative of Lady Huntingdon, the only daughter of Sir Robert Furnese, Bart., and widow of Lewis, Earl of Rockingham. The late Mr. Aldridge, who afterwards settled as minister of Jewin-street chapel, in London, was to have been ordained at the same time; and a letter from Mr. Fletcher to Lady Huntingdon contains a copy of his title for orders, to which Mr. Fletcher had obtained the necessary signatures. The cause of his failing to obtain episcopal ordination at this time is thus briefly stated by her Ladyship, in a letter to one of his fellow students, Mr. Hawksworth:—"Glazebrook was accepted for ordination; and Aldridge also, but for the ill humour of Mr. Morgan to Aldridge, who will not read in the Church his intentions for orders."

priest, by Dr. Hurd, then Bishop of Worcester. He speaks of this ceremony in these terms, in his "Treatise on Extempore Preaching:"—

"Never can I forget the serious manner with which the worthy Bishop of Worcester addressed himself to the candidates when I was ordained priest. His warnings and exhortations were such as well became a governor of the Church, and were truly expressive of that anxious concern which every godly prelate must feel when sending forth persons to undertake the pastoral office."

Under impressions like these Mr. Glazebrook's ministry was conducted. From the time of his ordination to the last concluding scene, his life did not contain much variety; but it was uniform and consistent.

In August, 1779, Mr. Glazebrook married the eldest daughter of Dr. Thomas Kirkland, of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, a man of acknowledged eminence in his profession, and a very old and intimate friend of Lady Huntingdon. He had long resided at Ashby, near her Ladyship's former residence, and was highly esteemed by the different members of her family for his professional skill and general excellence of character. He took his degree at Edinburgh, where he became a member of the Royal Medical Society; after which he settled at Ashby. In 1760 he was brought much into notice by his attendance on Mr. Johnson, who had been shot by her Ladyship's relative, Lord Ferrers, at Stanton, the residence of the Shirley family, about two miles from Ashby. His conduct in this most unhappy and distressing business was truly gratifying to Lady Huntingdon. Dr. Kirkland died in 1798, aged 77. He published five or six treatises, principally on medical and surgical subjects, some of which are much esteemed.

Soon after his marriage, Mr. Glazebrook came to reside at Warrington, as minister of St. James's, which was not consecrated for some time after. His zeal for the great and glorious truths of the everlasting Gospel, and the peculiar leading doctrines of the Reformation and the Church of which he was a minister, and to the belief of which he had so solemnly subscribed, together with his former connexion with Lady Huntingdon and those men of God who had so largely contributed to the revival of vital godliness in the land, rather injured him with respect to any intimate acquaintance with those who differed from him in religious opinions. Great pains having been taken to prejudice the minds of the people against any minister who might be appointed to St. James's, his situation was peculiarly embarrassing. Not finding himself very comfortable at Warrington, and seeing no immediate prospect of a change for the better, he applied to

Lady Huntingdon, hoping she would be able to obtain for him one of the livings in the gift of her son, the Earl of Huntingdon. But his Lordship's well-known infidel principles and long determined hostility to evangelical religion, excluded every prospect of success from that quarter. Her Ladyship's correspondence with Mr. Glazebrook and his father-in-law, Dr. Kirkland, while it exhibits her ardent desire to promote the welfare of immortal souls, eminently proves her strong maternal feelings towards those students who were educated under her patronage, whose lives exhibited lucid proof that they were honest, zealous, and sincere in the cause of God and truth.

The first letter to Mr. Glazebrook, and that to Dr. Kirkland, are dated from Trevecca, September 3, 1782:—

“ Dear Sir,—I received your obliging letter by Thorne.* He seems a gracious young man. Nothing but a sensible experience of the heart's rooted evils can make us *fully* sensible of the *want* of a whole and absolute salvation by the free bounty of another. To learn this by degrees is the surest and only best means to secure the true delight and peace of our souls as an abiding state. Thorne will be tenderly dealt with, yet consistently and faithfully.

“ It would be a great pleasure to me to have, with any hope of success, been able to recommend you to my son for a living; but for more than thirty years, his most implacable dislikes have not ceased to prove to me he never will be entreated on this subject. Knowing this, your next wishes in some offer in which you might be most useful, and a comfortable support for your family, and that certainly, and in a situation of credit to be sought for. A large congregation, on completing a chapel, have applied to me to appoint a minister. Could I be sure it would suit you, I would require *one hundred a year and a house*. It is within fourteen miles of Bath and Bristol, and these very large and populous congregations you might, by my direction, have access to, I hope with profit to yourself and others. This congregation is very large, and raised entirely by the students' labours among them, and is now to be fixed and settled in the connexion. In your absence at Bath, or elsewhere, I could supply, without expense to you, that congregation, by a previous agreement, which might be a considerable advantage to you, by those various committees appointed for the support of those ministers that attend, by rotation, in our several congregations. I would have you and your wife well consider of this, and I will let you know, on my being at Bath, anything certain on this subject, that our committees on this occasion shall comply with, and that appears or your advantage in your ministry, united with the temporal advantages of your family. Remember me kindly to your wife: and believe me, as ever, your truly faithful friend,
S. HUNTINGDON.

“ P.S.—Thanks for your book, which I hope will prove useful. Le

* A student at Trevecca, who was afterwards resident at Gloucester, and other places.

me know if this prospect suits your wishes, that an application may be made by my kindest endeavours for you. I have written for Dr. Kirkland's approbation, as he may have something better in view for you; and, as an old friend, I thought it but kind to him and you."

The following is her Ladyship's letter to Dr. Kirkland, of Ashby-de-la-Zouch:—

"Sir,—Your son-in-law, Mr. Glazebrook, has expressed to me his wishes that an application might be made to Lord Huntingdon for his succeeding to some living in his gift. Did I not certainly know this can never be obtained by me, it would have been a great pleasure to me to have done good to an honest, sensible young man, brought up by me, and whose religious principles I so highly esteem: but this being hopeless, and he not being satisfied with his present situation, I have an opportunity (I should hope) of placing him in a principal congregation, on a certain allowance of one hundred a year, and a house, and with much credit in the religious world. Your right to judge for the best advantage of your own child made me willing this should be considered by you; as, otherwise, a student out of this College must be ordained for it. A trial for a year may bring about a better situation, which, though I cannot answer for, yet probably time may produce. The general prejudices render matters delicate to all who cannot trust to something better than their own limited views, which their own uncertainty of eternal things must prove the weakness of all human purposes. My old regard for you and yours obliges me to this. Leaving my best wishes and prayers for your best direction, and begging the best blessings, as ever, for you and your family, I am, with true regard, your ever obliged friend, S. HUNTINGDON.

"P.S.—Could I be sure the prospect for Mr. Glazebrook was approved by him and you, I should use my earnest endeavours to obtain its success. Say all that is kind to Mrs. Kirkland."

This kind offer of the Countess Mr. Glazebrook was unable to accept, owing to the peculiarity of his situation at Warrington; and as his preaching in her Ladyship's chapel at that time would have inevitably exposed him to the censure of his diocesan. Mr. Glazebrook wrote to Lady Huntingdon, explaining the nature of his engagements to the Bishop of Chester; and the following is her Ladyship's reply:—

"College, Sept. 13, 1782.

"Dear Sir,—Being ignorant of the condition of your situation, from supposing you freed from any authority of the bishop; and, under the character of a donative, the offer made in *this view* might have many advantages. But, by your letter of to-day, you must hazard too much by accepting a proposal that must expose you to any offensive step of the bishop; and this, most certainly, would be the case in so large a sphere of action, and so publicly known as you must be. Your family, also, might suffer, and various discontents unavoidably be sustained by the changes you might be called to. Great faith and great patience are wanting to support ministers truly devoted to God in the real

labours that his love and power call upon them for; and unless this is the case, the smaller field of usefulness must be submitted to, and, indeed, your point seems yet to remain as you are. Indeed, in the former view of things, and wishing you owned of the Lord, and blessed in your own soul, I thought much comfort and relief might be yielded you; but as matters are, by no means would I advise it. If you inform Dr. Kirkland of my mistaken information of your situation, he will best judge of my friendship by my ignorance of the truth:—and here it may end, only should anything lie in my way properly calculated, as you now stand, with service to you, rest assured it will be a great pleasure to see, consistently with your character, every advantage in the Lord's will which can be best for you. Most kindly remember me to your wife, and tell her, her old friend Mrs. Wills is happy and well. Mr. Wills's large field of action makes them both the most faithful witnesses for God I know, and bright and shining characters—a very Caleb, fully following the Lord in his eminence and excellence above his fellows. May the Lord make and keep us faithful unto death, is my best prayer for myself and all I esteem on earth. I am, truly, your faithful friend,

S. HUNTINGDON.

“P.S.—I leave this place for Bath on the 23rd of this month, if the Lord permit. In this connexion there is rotation of *Clergy*, throughout the large chapels and congregations. These serve some eight, some ten weeks in a congregation. Some of these have livings, and such are allowed two guineas a week, a lodging, and travelling charges (finding their own board), according to the time they serve in each congregation. Should you like to make trial of being one of these, by way of trial only, at any time, you can have your church supplied. Let me know, and I will appoint you. I don't press this as advice, but the like kind offer several eminent servants of God rejoice in.”

On the death of his noble patroness, all prospect of advancement or promotion seemed for ever cut off; but that God whom he served, and whose everlasting Gospel he so faithfully proclaimed, was preparing another sphere of usefulness for him. The late Countess of Moira, Lady Huntingdon's eldest and only surviving daughter, who in several instances acted with great kindness towards those who had been connected with her venerable mother, was disposed to befriend him; and on Dr. Kirkland making application to Lord Moira, who inherited, in right of his Countess, all the estates and baronies of her brother, Francis, late Earl of Huntingdon, presented him to the vicarage of Belton, in Leicestershire. This change of situation was very agreeable to Dr. Kirkland, who had long wished to have his son-in-law placed near to him. In this situation he continued till the time of his decease; retaining, with the full approbation, and almost at the request of Bishop Cleaver, his chapel at Latchford, Warrington. If zeal, and integrity in the discharge of the laborious duties of his office, and the unwearied exertion

of considerable abilities for a long series of years, can entitle a man to attention and regard, or his memory to gratitude and esteem, Mr. Glazebrook was eminently entitled to the meed of praise. Nor was he an unsuccessful labourer in his Lord's vineyard. It pleased God to make him the honoured instrument of "turning many to righteousness," both at Warrington and other places where he laboured, who will be "his joy, and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming." Neither was it the pulpit only that witnessed his zeal. His active mind furnished many materials for the press. Besides his Treatise on Extemporary Preaching, he published an answer to Mr. Gilbert Wakefield's Treatise on Baptism, Letters on Infant Baptism; and after his death a volume of sermons was published by his family, and well received by the public.*

But to return to the history of her Ladyship's College. Being provided with able teachers, it soon began to fill with students. From that retirement the Countess despatched the requisite supplies for the increased congregations under her patronage; and as the calls were often urgent, her students were too frequently thrust forth into the harvest before they had made any considerable proficiency in the languages or sacred literature, in which it had been her intention they should be instructed. Yet, being men of strong sense, and real devotedness to God, their ministry was greatly blessed, and the accounts of their success animated her to greater exertions. They were all itinerant—moved from congregation to congregation in rotation established; and her correspondence with them, to regulate and provide a constant supply, was a labour to which her active spirit alone was equal.

Against those educated in seminaries similar to Lady Huntingdon's College, an objection has frequently been urged, that they are *man-made* ministers. But if they be *faithful* men, the objection falls to the ground; for they were previously taught of God, and are sent by him. It is readily granted, that if students, though they may have been in seminaries, are not holy men, they are utterly unfit for the work of the ministry, and merit the reproachful, epithet of man-made ministers. But let it be remembered, that persons destitute of divine grace, or of gifts for the pastoral office, may set up themselves for preachers: and when this is the case, it may be fairly asked whether *self-made* ministers are one whit better than *man-made* ministers?

* For further particulars of Mr. Glazebrook see a memoir of him in the Evangelical Register for 1836.

Though Lady Huntingdon experienced the countenance and support of many active and eminently useful members of the Christian Church, she likewise felt the disapprobation of others equally good and singularly holy. Among the letter we find her pious and excellent friend Mr. Berridge. To her Ladyship's letter, containing the plan for the examination of the students to be admitted, we find him returning the following answer:—

“The soil you have chosen is proper; Welsh mountains afford a brisk air for a student; and the rules are excellent: but I doubt the success of the project, and fear it will occasion you more trouble than all your other undertakings besides. Are we commanded to make labourers, or to ‘pray the Lord to send labourers?’ Will not Jesus choose and teach and send forth his ministering servants now, as he did the disciples aforetime; and glean them up when and where and how he pleaseth? The world says no: because they are strangers to a divine commission and a divine teaching. And what if these asses blunder about the Master's meaning for a time, and mistake it often, as they did formerly?—no great harm will ensue, provided they are kept from paper and ink, or from a white wall and charcoal. Do you like to see cade-lambs in a house and suckling with a finger, or to view them skipping after the dam in their own proper pasture? We read of a school of prophets in Scripture, but we do not read that it was God's appointment. Elijah visited the school, which was at Bethel, and seems to have been fond of it; yet the Lord commands him to fetch a successor, not from the school, but, as the Romans fetched a dictator, from the plough. Are we told of a single *preaching* prophet that was taken out of this school; or do we find any public employment given the scholars, except once sending a light-heeled young man, when light heels were needful, with a horn of oil to anoint Jehu, 2 Kings ix. That old prophet, who told a sad lie to another prophet, was of this school, and might be the master of this College, for he was a grey-headed man, 1 Kings xiii. 11. Whilst my heart is thus prattling to you very simply, like a child, it stands in no fear of offending you; and if your project be right, the Master will keep you stedfast, and you will only smile at my prattling. Indeed I am the most dubious man in the world about my own judgment, and will stickle for nothing, excepting to live and to trust in my Lord.”

Trevecca House, in the parish of Talgarth, South Wales, was an ancient structure, and supposed to have been part of an old castle, erected in the reign of Henry the Second. The date over the entrance, now almost effaced, is 1176. This building was opened as a College for religious and literary instruction, and the chapel dedicated to the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, on the 24th of August, 1768, the anniversary of Lady Huntingdon's birth-day, by the Rev. George Whitefield, who preached from Exodus xx. 24—“In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and bless thee:” and on the

following sabbath-day he addressed a congregation of some thousands, who assembled in the court before the College: his text on this occasion was, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." When speaking of the dedication of the College, Mr. Whitefield says, "What we have seen and felt at the College is unspeakable."

An unction from the Holy One did unquestionably rest in a remarkable manner on the inmates of Trevecca; and accounts of the scenes there witnessed cannot be perused but with deep interest. The venerable and respected John Clayton, who was himself one of the early students at Trevecca, a few years since, when affectionately advocating the cause of the same institution, now removed to Cheshunt, mentioned several pleasing particulars relating to Trevecca College. Lady Huntingdon, it seems, commonly resided in the College, and the influence of her fervent piety was highly beneficial. The greatest deference was paid by the students to their tutors, and habits of neatness and decorum were cultivated. Above all, the spirit of devotion was at Trevecca eminently apparent. The delighted visitant, when walking in the neighbouring vale, might often hear distinctly from several parts of the surrounding woodlands the voice of social prayer proceeding from several little bands of students who were pouring out their hearts before the God of mercy.

Active exertion was combined with devotional exercises: several horses were kept for the purpose of conveying the students to more distant places on Saturday afternoons, while the nearer villages were visited on foot, and thus the benefits of the College were felt throughout the surrounding towns and villages, to the distance of twenty or thirty miles. There were pressing calls heard from every side, "Come over and help us." Being possessed of an experimental acquaintance with the things of God, and fired with holy zeal and ardent love to the souls of their perishing fellow-men—the ministry of the students was much blessed. There was a fire and freshness about their ministrations, together with a laudable preference for that style of preaching which gave prominence to those truths which are most likely to awaken the careless and to increase the Church from the world. They were indeed irregular troops, but they brought in more captives than the disciplined squadrons, and were eminently serviceable to the cause of real religion.

Frequently a student was sent out to greater distances to preach in certain *districts* or *rounds*, as they were termed. On these tours, chapels, private houses, market places, or fields, as occasion required, became the scenes of a student's labours;

and thus the Gospel was introduced, or the cause of Christ revived in very many places, where now there are stated preachers and numerous hearers. Shall these movements be complained of as *irregular*? Who censures the unmeasured steps of the man who, at the risk of his own safety, plunges into the flood, and snatches a fellow mortal from the deep?—and are not souls, immortal souls, to be valued at least as highly as the bodies of men? Men were perishing in multitudes for lack of knowledge, and we cannot but venerate those disinterested servants of God who willingly exposed themselves to the insults of the unthinking crowd, and who endured much hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, that they might win souls for Him. They were, indeed, despised by men, but they were approved by God, and the Spirit of glory and of grace rested on them.

“Thanks be to God (exclaims one of them),† He is mindful of us at College, and we have had some delightful times amongst the people since the anniversary. On the bare mention of our royal entertainment at that season, the hearts of many are rekindled into a flame of love and gratitude; their song —‘*O moliant i Dduw byth*,’—O praise be to God for ever! is not, and I pray the Lord may never be forgotten; such seasons, such privileges, and such continued manifestations of divine love and power call for much *humility* and *self-abasement*.”

May He who has the residue of the Spirit pour that heavenly influence anew on all our Churches, and give us to renew the days of old!

Some months after the dedication of the College, Lady Huntingdon received the following letter from her old correspondent Mr. Berridge, whose ideas of that institution seem to have undergone a change—

“My Lady,—When the frost broke up, I became a scalled miserable indeed; just able at times to peep into my Bible, but not able to endure the touch of a quill. I am now reviving, but not revived; and can venture to take up a pen. You shall have its first-fruits, such as they are.

“I am glad to hear of the plentiful effusion from above on Talgarth. Jesus has now baptized your College, and thereby shown his approbation of the work. You may therefore rejoice, but rejoice with trembling. Faithful labourers may be expected from thence; but if it is Christ’s College, a Judas will certainly be found amongst them. I believe the baptism will prove a lasting one, but I believe the sensible comfort will not last always nor long. Neither is it convenient. In

* A society—one of the glories of our country—gives a gold medal for every such effort made to save the body: will not the Lord give a greater prize for the recovery of an immortal soul?

† Rev. Anthony Crole, afterwards minister of Pinners’ Hall, London.

the present state of things, a winter is as much wanted to continue the earth fruitful as a summer. If the grass was always growing, it would soon grow to nothing; just as flowers, that blow much and long, generally blow themselves to death. And as it is thus with the ground, so is it with the labourers too. Afflictions, desertions, and temptations are as needful as consolations. Jonah's whale will teach a good lesson, as well as Pisgah's top; and a man may sometimes learn as much from being a night and a day in the deep, as from being forty days in the mount. I see Jonah come out of a whale and cured of rebellion; I see Moses go up to the mount with meekness, but come down in a huff and break the tables. Further I see three picked disciples attending their master to the mount, and fall asleep there. I believe you must be clad only in sack-cloth whilst you tarry in the wilderness, and be a right mourning widow till the Bridegroom fetches you home. Jesus has given you a hand and a heart to execute great things for his glory, and therefore he will deal you out a suitable measure of afflictions, to keep your balance steady. Did Paul labour more abundantly than all his brethren? He had more abundant stripes than them all. The Master will always new shave your crown, before he puts a fresh coronet upon your head; and I expect to hear of a six months' illness, when I hear of a building of a new chapel. I cannot comfort you with saying that I think your day is almost spent; but it is some encouragement to know that your noon is past, and that your afternoon shadows lengthen. Go on, my dear Lady; build and fight manfully, and believe lustily. Look upwards and press forwards. Heaven's eternal hills are before you, and Jesus stands with arms wide open to receive you. One hour's sight and enjoyment of the Bridegroom in his place above will make you forget all your troubles on the way. Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come and receive you with a heavenly welcome. Here we must purge and bleed, for physic is needful, and a tender Physician administers all. But inhabitants of heaven cry out and sing 'we are no more sick.'

“ Ah! Lord, with tardy steps I creep,
And sometimes sing, and sometimes weep;
Yet strip me of this house of clay,
And I will sing as sweet as they.”

“ A very heavy time have I had for the last three weeks; cloudy days and moonless nights. Only a little consolation fetched down now and then by a little dull prayer. At times I am ready to wish that sin and the devil were both dead; they make such a horrible racket within me and about me. Rather let me pray, Lord give me faith and patience, teach me to expect the cross daily, and help me to take it up cheerfully. Wofully weary I am of myself, but know not how to live and feast daily upon Jesus. A treasure he is indeed, but lies hid in a field, and I know not how to dig in the dark.

“ Your francs are all spent, I find; and so poor Jack must now be like Marget in a cage, have all the chatter to himself. This looks mighty civil, but is not wondrous honest. For good folks should pay their debts, as well as give gifts. May daily showers from above fall

upon you and refresh you ; and the dew of heaven light upon your chapels and college. I remain your affectionate servant in a loving Jesus,

“ JOHN BERRIDGE.

“ Kind respects to Miss Orton.—Everton, Dec. 30, 1768.”

Mr. Fletcher was president, and Mr. Easterbrook headmaster when the College was solemnly dedicated to God. The latter, however, did not remain long at Trevecca. He was a deeply pious and useful man, an able preacher, and a bold defender of the truths of Christianity. His conversation was as becometh the Gospel of Christ. He adorned the Gospel of God his Saviour. Even keen-eyed jealousy could fix no blot upon him, either as a Christian, or in his ministerial character : but nevertheless, in this he gloried not. The language of his heart was—

“ Whate'er in me seems wise, or good,
Or just, I here disclaim ;
I wash my garments in the blood
Of the atoning Lamb.”

His great and continued labours, with too great a neglect of himself, brought on a general weakness, which increased more and more, notwithstanding the best medical assistance ; and at last took him out of this world to his eternal reward, on the 21st of January, 1791. Having imbibed much of the spirit of his divine Master, he was meek, humble, and devout. The love of God was shed abroad in his heart, and the language of prayer and praise continually dwelt in his life. Besides being Vicar of Temple, he was likewise Ordinary of Newgate, and his fidelity in the discharge of his ministerial duties was highly commendable. Unmoved by the banter of reviling tongues, undismayed by the impious scoffs of ungodly men, he boldly asserted the grand fundamental truths of God, declaring the universal depravity of the human heart, the insufficiency of human merit in point of acceptance with Jehovah, and the indispensable necessity of regeneration and evangelic holiness in order to eternal life and happiness. Though a minister of the Established Church, he yet manifested a great degree of good will and affection for those of his brethren in the ministry who, from motives of conscience, thought proper to dissent from him. A fuller proof of his disinterestedness and candour we can scarcely wish for than that which he gave in expressing his approbation and joy when Temple Chapel was first opened, in July 1785, by the Rev. Mr. Hoskins, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the poor, and others of his parish, who were disposed to attend ; so happy was he to see Zion flourish, by whatever means, or by whomsoever the Lord thought proper to send. As his life was

a scene of general usefulness and devotion to the public good, so his death was crowned with serenity, peace, and joy. To a friend he said, "I have fled to the city of refuge, where the manslayer cannot reach me. O, tell my friends to flee to this city of refuge. What should I have done all this while, with death staring me in the face, if I had not fled to Jesus for safety?"—Two sermons were preached on the occasion of his death; one by the Rev. John Hey, minister of Castle-green meeting, the other at the Methodist chapel, by the Rev. Henry Moore; both of which were afterwards published.

Mr. Easterbrook appears to have left Trevecca previous to the anniversary of the opening of the College in 1769. In the summer of that year the Rev. John Jones, who had lately withdrawn from Mr. Wesley's connexion, made application for the situation of head master. He had been one of the masters at Kingswood school for several years, was author of the Latin Grammar which is taught there, and had obtained Episcopal ordination from the Bishop of Arcadia. A letter from Mr. Fletcher to Lady Huntingdon gives some particulars relative to Mr. Jones's application:—

"Madely, July 1st, 1769.

"My Lady,—I repeat my thanks to your Ladyship for the repeated offer of helping me by one of your chaplains if I go to Switzerland. By my last, which I sent a few hours before yours came to hand, I informed your Ladyship I postponed my journey till next year,—in short, that I do not think of it at present, for who can boast of to-morrow?

* * * * *

"Mr. Jones's letter puzzled me a little. I did not know what answer to make to it. I have however sat down, and, after an introduction, I say—'The first and grand point to be kept in view at Lady Huntingdon's College is to maintain and grow in the spirit of faith and power that breathes through the acts of the Apostles, and was exemplified in the lives of the primitive Christians. The first and grand qualification required in a person called to be at the head of such a College is, then, a degree of faith and power from above, with an entire devotedness to God and his cause. The master who is there at present seems, on account of his youth, to be deficient in point of Christian experience. Nor is he a proper master of the Greek, nor even of the harder classics, so that he can hardly maintain his superiority over those who read Cicero and Horace. Whether this inconveniency, Sir, would be avoided, suppose you were to succeed him, I cannot judge by your letter. He is also unacquainted with Divinity and the Sciences, of which it is proper he should give the students some idea; and how far you may excel him in these points, Sir, is not in my power to determine. He hath twenty-five guineas a year, with his board, room, and washing. I dare say the generous foundress would not hesitate

to raise the salary of a master of superior merit, though she hopes none would undertake that province for the sake of money.'

"After giving him a little account of the business of the College, I add—'The variety of classes in it demands great assiduity and diligence in the master. I would not, therefore, advise any one to engage without a proper trial. I have begged of Lady Huntingdon not to fix upon a master till she had allowed him to look about him, and see how he liked the place, people, and business; and as you very properly observe, Sir, it would be improper to *engage to repent of the undertaking*, I think that (if upon consulting with the Lord in prayer, and with Mr. Maxfield in conversation, you find your heart free to embrace so peculiar an opportunity of being useful to your generation) it might be best to come and see how you like the business, and how it agrees with you; and should not matters prove agreeable on either side, I dare say Lady Huntingdon will pay your travelling expenses to Talgarth and back again.'

"In a letter to Mr. Maxfield I desired him to inform your Ladyship how Mr. Jones's mind stands after reflecting on the contents of my letter, and whether he would go to make a trial. I add, that so much depends upon the aptness to teach, Christian experience, solidity, liveliness, and devotedness of a master, that no one could presume to judge of these things by a letter, or even by a day's conversation. The proof of food is the eating of it.

"If your Ladyship does not approve of this step, a line to Mr. Maxfield will rectify what you think amiss, and oblige, my Lady, your unworthy servant,

J. FLETCHER.

"P.S.—If your Ladyship is so good as to spare a minister for three weeks, I shall be glad to wait upon the dear young men and their patroness at College, as soon as he makes way for my leaving this place. It will be a good opportunity to send for Mr. Davies. We begin to remember here the 16th day of the month; may the Lord make it memorable!"

Having spent the principal part of the summer at Tunbridge Wells, Lady Huntingdon left in August 1769, in order to attend the anniversary of the opening of the College, a service of peculiar solemnity, and attended with remarkable manifestations of the Divine favour and love in those days. For several weeks previous to this event, her Ladyship was actively engaged in making preparations for the approaching solemnity, and invited many eminent ministers to assist at the services to be held on that occasion. On Friday, the 18th of August, Mr. Daniel Rowlands, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. William Williams arrived at the College; and on the following morning Mr. Rowlands preached in the chapel to a crowded congregation, on "Lord, are there few that be saved?" In the afternoon the Lord's Supper was administered, when Mr. Fletcher addressed the communicants and spectators in a very close and pointed man-

ner. Power from on high accompanied the word, and rendered it effectual to the conversion of many. Mr. Williams then gave out the hymn—

“Come, let us join our cheerful song,
With angels round the throne,” &c.

which was sung with the most lively feelings of devotion. Abundance of people being gathered together, Mr. Howel Harris stood in the court and gave a solemn warning to a large congregation, from these awful words:—“The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.”

On the 19th, Mr. Shirley and several exhorters and lay preachers arrived at Trevecca. The next day, being Sunday, a very numerous congregation assembled in the court, the chapel being much too small to contain the half of the people. Public service commenced at ten o'clock. Mr. Fletcher read prayers, and Mr. Shirley preached on “Acquaint thyself now with him, and be at peace.” At one the sacrament was administered in the chapel, Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Fletcher alternately addressed the communicants during the distribution of the elements, and Mr. Williams closed the solemnity with a suitable address to the awakened and unawakened. In the afternoon Mr. Fletcher stood in the court and applied the words of the Apostles, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,” to an immense congregation, many of whom appeared to receive the word with gladness. When the sermon was concluded a hymn was sung, and Mr. Rowlands explained and enforced in the Welsh language those solemn words—“It is appointed unto men once to die.”

From this time to the day of the anniversary, people flocked from all parts to Trevecca. Mr. Howel Harris and several of the Welsh exhorters assisted the clergymen assembled at the College, so that there was preaching twice every day. On Wednesday, the 23rd, Mr. Wesley, accompanied by Mr. Howel Davies and Mr. Peter Williams of Caermarthen, arrived at Trevecca:—

“I preached in the morning (says Mr. Wesley) to as many as her Ladyship's chapel could well contain, which is extremely neat, or rather elegant, as is the dining-room, the college, and all the house. About nine, Howel Harris desired me to give a short exhortation to his family. I did so, and then went back to my Lady's, and laid me down in peace.”

At an early hour on the morning of Thursday the 24th, the Lord's Supper was administered by Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shirley, first to the clergymen assembled at the College, then to students, after which the Countess of Huntingdon, the Countess of

Buchan, Lady Anne Erskine, Miss Orton, and the other members of her family received. An amazing concourse of people being collected from all parts, the public service commenced at ten o'clock. Mr. Howel Davies and Mr. Daniel Rowlands read the prayers, with appropriate lessons selected for the occasion, after which, Mr. Fletcher preached an exceedingly lively sermon in the court, the chapel being far too small to contain the congregation; when he had finished, the Rev. William Williams preached in Welsh till about two o'clock. At two they all dined with Lady Huntingdon; and baskets of bread and meat were distributed amongst the people in the court, many of whom had come from a great distance. Public service commenced again at three o'clock, when Mr. Wesley preached in the court, then Mr. Fletcher; about five the congregation was dismissed. Between seven and eight the love-feast began, during which Mr. Shirley, Mr. Davies, and Mr. Rowlands gave short exhortations, and Mr. Peter Williams and Mr. Howel Harris engaged in prayer. There were eight clergymen present on this occasion.

Thus terminated an anniversary in which much of the divine presence was experienced both by ministers and hearers. Such divine power accompanied the discourses delivered on this occasion, and such fervent and lively devotion breathed in all the addresses to the throne of grace, that very many were savingly impressed with the importance of attending to the great concerns of eternity:—

“Truly (observes her Ladyship) our God was in the midst of us, and many felt him eminently nigh. The gracious influence of his Spirit seemed to rest on every soul. Many with whom I have conversed experience a spring-tide of sensible comfort and strong joy, and vehement longings after more communion with Him, especially in the means of grace. Though necessarily much hurried with outward things, my mind was preserved in peace: I enjoyed a divine composure, a heavenly serenity of soul, while my communion was with the Father and the Son. Words fail to describe the holy triumph with which the great congregation sung—

‘Captain of thine enlisted host,
Display thy glorious banner high,’ &c.

It was a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord—a time never to be forgotten.”

The day after the anniversary Mr. Wesley set off for Bristol, and on the following day Mr. Davies and Mr. Rowlands left Trevecca. Mr. Shirley, in the afternoon, took his stand on the scaffold in the court, and addressed a multitude on Hebrews vii. 25:—

“From this time (adds her Ladyship) we had public preaching

every day at four o'clock, whilst Mr. Shirley and Mr. Fletcher remained. Copious showers of divine blessings have been felt on every side. Truly God is good to Israel. I am weak, ungrateful, and humble. Continue thy goodness, and in much greater abundance. O that I may be more and more useful to the souls of my fellow-creatures. I want to be every moment, all life, all zeal, all activity for God, and ever on the stretch for closer communion with Him. My soul pants to live more to him, and to be more holy in heart and life, that all my nature may shew forth the glories of the Lamb."

CHAPTER XXXII.

Mr. Joseph Benson appointed Head Master at Trevecca—Mr. Fletcher's conduct at the College—His pastoral letters to the Students—Mr. Benson's dismissal—Lady Huntingdon's certificate—Second Anniversary of the College—Mr. Shirley and Mr. Venn—Mr. Thornton's gift to the College—Lady Glenorchy's generosity—Letter from Lady Glenorchy—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Third Anniversary of the College—Students educated at Trevecca—Lady Huntingdon visits Swansea—History of her Chapel there—Mr. Edmund Jones—Mr. David Jones (of Langan)—Letter to Lady Huntingdon—Anniversary services of 1774 and 1776—Letter from Mr. Toplady—A remarkable incident.

SOME months after the anniversary, through Mr. Fletcher's means, and in consequence of Mr. Wesley's recommendation, the Rev. Joseph Benson was appointed to the situation of head master of the College. Some years previous to this he had filled the office of classical master of Kingswood school, and was at this period a student of St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford, where he regularly kept his terms, and was, according to the testimony of a contemporary clergyman of the Church of England, who was his most intimate friend and associate at the University, conscientiously attentive to the studies and obligations of his situation.

Mr. Benson being yet greatly wanted at Kingswood, and having likewise his terms to keep at Oxford, could only pay Lady Huntingdon's College a short visit for the present, which was in January 1770. It will illustrate the correctness of his views on the subject of Divine Providence to insert a paragraph from his journal, in which he adverts to this change of situation :

"Nov. 27, 1767.—I have this last year, in general, had the desire of my heart turned to God, and have been led to pray much and fer-

vently that he would make me holy and useful in the world, and dispose of me in life as may be most for his glory. The first thing that Providence seemed to point out to me was Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca. The time, however, was not come for my leaving Kingswood. I have lately seen my way plain, and concluded on going to Trevecca. I pray God to direct my way, and make me useful in every station to which I may be called by his providence."

In the spring following Mr. Benson went to reside at Trevecca, and for some time was well satisfied with his new situation. The young men were serious, and made considerable progress in learning, and many of them seemed to have talents for the ministry. Mr. Fletcher visited them frequently, and it is not possible to describe the veneration in which he was held by all at the College. Like Elijah, in the schools of the prophets, he was revered, he was loved, he was almost adored: and that, not only by every student, but by every member of the family; and, indeed, he was worthy:—

"The reader will pardon me (says Mr. Benson) if he think I exceed. My heart kindles while I write. Here it was that I saw, shall I say an angel in human flesh? I should not far exceed the truth if I said so. But here I saw a descendant of fallen Adam so fully raised above the ruins of the fall, that though by the body he was tied down to earth, yet was his whole *conversation in heaven*: yet was his life, from day to day, *hid with Christ in God*. Prayer, praise, love, and zeal, all ardent, elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty, were the elements in which he continually lived. And as to others, his one employment was to call, entreat, and urge the students to ascend with him to the glorious source of being and blessedness."

Mr. Fletcher had leisure comparatively for nothing else.—Languages, art, sciences, grammar, rhetoric, logic, even divinity itself, as it is called, were all laid aside when he appeared in the school-room among the students. His full heart would not suffer him to be silent. He *must* speak, and they were readier to hearken to this servant and minister of Jesus Christ than to attend to Sallust, Virgil, Cicero, or any Latin or Greek historian, poet, or philosopher they had been engaged in reading. And they seldomed hearkened long before they were all in tears, and every heart caught fire from the flame that burned in his soul.

These seasons generally terminated in this: Being convinced that to be *filled with the Holy Ghost* was a better qualification for the ministry of the Gospel than any classical learning, (although that too be useful in its place,) after speaking awhile in the school-room, he used frequently to say, "As many of you as are athirst for this fulness of the Spirit, follow me into my room." On this, many of them have instantly followed him, and

there continued for two or three hours, wrestling like Jacob for the blessing, praying one after another, till they could bear to kneel no longer. This was not done once or twice, but many times:—

“ And I have sometimes seen him (says Mr. Benson) on these occasions, once in particular, so filled with the love of God, that he could contain no more, but cried out, *O, my God, withhold thy hand, or the vessel will burst!* But he afterwards told me he was afraid he had grieved the spirit of God; and that he ought rather to have prayed that the Lord would have enlarged the vessel, or have suffered it to break, that the soul might have had no further bar or interruption to its enjoyment of the supreme good. In this he was certainly right. For, as Mr. Wesley has observed, the proper prayer on such an occasion would have been—

“ ‘ Give me the enlarged desire,
And open, Lord, my soul,
Thy own fulness to require,
And comprehend the whole!
Stretch my faith's capacity
Wider and yet wider still;
Then with all that is in Thee
My ravish'd spirit fill!’ ”

Such was the ordinary employment of this man of God while he remained at Trevecca. He preached the word of life to the students and family, and as many of the neighbours as desired to be present. He was “ instant in season and out of season, he reproofed, rebuked, exhorted with all long suffering.” He was always employed, either in illustrating some important truth, or exhorting to some neglected duty, or administering some needful comfort, or relating some useful anecdote, or making some profitable remark or observation upon some occurrence. And his devout soul, always burning with love and zeal, led him to intermingle prayer with all he uttered. Meanwhile his manner was so solemn, and at the same time so mild and insinuating, that it was hardly possible for any one who had the happiness of being in his company not to be struck with awe and charmed with love, as if in the presence of an angel or departed spirit:—

“ Indeed (says Mr. Benson) I frequently thought, while attending to his heavenly discourse and divine spirit, that he was so different from, and superior to, the generality of mankind, as to look more like Moses or Elijah, or some prophet or apostle come again from the dead, than a mortal man, dwelling in a house of clay. It is true, his weak and long afflicted body proclaimed him to be human; but the grace which so eminently filled and adorned his soul manifested him to be divine. And long before his happy spirit returned to God who gave it, that which was human seemed in a great measure to be *swallowed up of life.*”

And as Mr. Fletcher was thus zealous and unwearied in his

exhortations to, and prayers for, the students and other members of the family, while present with them, so he was far from being inattentive to their spiritual welfare when absent. His concern for their prosperity in the divine life constrained him, during his absence from them, frequently to address to them pastoral letters full of instruction and exhortation. One of these, the only one we have been able to obtain, we shall here insert. It was written from Madley, July 23, 1770, immediately after his return from abroad :—

“ TO THE MASTERS AND STUDENTS OF LADY HUNTINGDON’S COLLEGE.

“ Grace, mercy, and peace attend you, my dear brethren, from God our Father, and from our Lord and Brother Jesus Christ. *Brother*, do I say? but should I not rather have written ALL? Is not he *all and in all*? *All* to believers, for he is their God or the *λογος* (*the word*), and their friend, brother, father, spouse, &c. &c., as he is *λογος γενομενος σαρξ* (*the word made flesh*). From him, through him, and in him, I salute you in the Spirit. I believe he is here with me and in me; I believe he is yonder with you and in you; for ‘in him we live, and move, and have,’ not only our animal, but rational and spiritual ‘being.’ I believe it, I say, therefore I write. May the powerful grain of faith remove the mountain of remaining unbelief, that you and I may see things as God sees them, that we may no more judge by appearances, but judge righteous judgment; that we may no more walk by carnal sight, but by faith, the sight of God’s children below! When this is the case, we shall discover that the Creator is ALL indeed, and that creatures (which we are wont to put in his place since the fall) are mere nothings, passing clouds that our Sun of Righteousness hath thought fit to clothe himself with, and paint some of his glory upon. In an instant he could scatter them into their original nothing, or resorb them for ever, and stand without competitor, *יהוה*, the BEING. But suppose that all creatures should stand for ever, little signatures of God, what are they even in their most glorious estate, but as tapers kindled by his light, as well as formed by his power? Now conceive a sun, a spiritual sun, whose centre is every where, whose circumference can be found no where; a sun whose lustre as much surpasses the brightness of the luminary that rules the day, as the Creator surpasses the creature; and say, What are the twinkling tapers of good men on earth—what is the smoking flax of wicked creatures—what the glittering stars of saints in heaven? Why they are all lost in his transcendent glory; and if any one of these would set himself up as an object of esteem, regard, or admiration, he must indeed be made with *self* and *pride*: he must be (as dear Mr. Harris hath told us) a foolish apostate, a devil. Understand this, believe this, and you will sink to unknown depths of self-horror for having aspired at being *somebody*, self-humiliation for seeing yourself *nobody*, or, what is worse, an *evil-body*. But I would not have you dwell even upon this evil so as to lose sight of your sun, unless it be to see him covered, on this account with your flesh and blood, and

wrapt in the cloud of our nature. Then you will cry out with St. Paul, O the depth ! Then finding the manhood is again resorbed into the Godhead, you will gladly renounce all selfish separate existence in Adam and from Adam. You will take Christ to be your life, you will become his members by eating his flesh and drinking his blood, you will consider his flesh as your flesh, his bone as your bone, his spirit as your spirit, his righteousness as your righteousness, his cross as your cross, and his crown (whether of thorns or glory) as your crown : you will reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through his dear Redeemer : you will renounce propriety, you will heartily and gladly say, ‘Not I, not I, but Christ liveth, and only *because he lives I do, and shall live also.*’ When it is so with us, then are we creatures in our Creator, and redeemed creatures in our Redeemer. Then we understand and feel what he says, ‘Separate from me, *χωρὶς ἐμὲ τὰ κτίσται ἄδεν εἰστε ; χωρὶς ἐμὲ τὰ σωτῆρος οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν.*’ (*Without me, the Creator, ye are nothing ; without me, the Saviour, ye can do nothing.*)

“‘The moment I consider Christ and myself as two I am gone,’ says Luther, and I say so too ; I am gone into self and into anti-Christ, for that which will be *something* will not let Christ be *all*, and what will not let Christ be *all*, must certainly be anti-Christ. What a poor *jejune* dry thing is doctrinal Christianity compared with the clear and *heartfelt assent* that the believer gives to these fundamental truths ! What life, what strength, what comfort, flow out from them ! O, my friends, let us believe, and we shall see, taste, and handle the word of life. When I stand in unbelief I am like a drop of muddy water drying up in the sun of temptation ; I can neither comfort, nor help, nor preserve myself : when I do believe and close in with Christ, I am like that same drop losing itself in a boundless bottomless sea of purity, light, life, power and love ; there *my good* and *my evil* are equally nothing, equally swallowed up, and grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. There I wish you all to be ; there I beg you and I may meet with all God’s children. I long to see you, that I may impart unto you (should God make use of such a worm) some spiritual gift, and that I may be comforted by the mutual faith both of you and me, and by your growth in grace and in divine as well as human wisdom, during my long absence.

“I hope matters will be contrived so that I may be with you to behold your order before the anniversary : meanwhile I remain your affectionate fellow-labourer, and servant in the Gospel of Christ,

“J. FLETCHER.”

Mr. Benson continued at Trevecca about nine months, when he was discharged from that office ; not for any defect of learning or piety, or any fault found with his behaviour, but wholly on account of the part which he took in the controversy relative to the Minutes of Conference. The particulars of his dismissal will be found in the chapter which gives the history of the controversy. He had the comfort, however, to receive from Lady

Huntingdon, on quitting her College, the following certificate, equally creditable to both parties, and which is here copied from her Ladyship's hand-writing:—

“ This is to certify, that Mr. Joseph Benson was master for the languages in my College at Talgarth for nine months, and that during that time, from his capacity, sobriety, and diligence, he acquitted himself properly in that character, and I am ready at any time to testify this in his behalf whenever required.

“ College, Jan. 17, 1771.

S. HUNTINGDON.”

The causes which led to Mr. Benson's removal from Oxford were painful to him, and discreditable to his opposers. He purposed to have continued at the University until he should graduate in the usual manner, but was discouraged by the hostility of his tutor, to whom it appears his open and frank disposition led him to confess his connexion with Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Wesley, together with some of those irregularities which those connexions occasioned. Whilst classical master at Kingswood School, it was his custom to keep meetings among the colliers, and to exhort them and pray with them; and also when tutor at Lady Huntingdon's college he was wont to go out into the villages to preach on the Sundays to the poor ignorant inhabitants. On this account Mr. Bowerbank, the Vice-principal of Edmund's Hall, refused to act any longer in the capacity of a tutor to Mr. Benson, and declined signing his testimonials for orders. Thus he was cruelly deprived of the advantage of a University education, and hindered from entering the ministry in a regular manner, for doing what he judged his duty, and what perhaps could not be proved contrary to any law, human or divine. Some time after this, he made another attempt to obtain orders in the Established Church, but was most ungraciously refused, even without being permitted to be examined. This led him to join Mr. Wesley's Connexion, of which he was a bright ornament for the space of half a century, and he appears to have stood in the esteem and affection of the Wesleyan Methodists next to their venerable founder.

On the 18th of August, 1770, Lady Huntingdon, with Mr. Shirley and Mr. Venn, arrived at Brislington, near Bristol, the residence of James Ireland, Esq., a man well known in the religious world, and the friend of all parties. Mr. Wesley was then at Bristol, where he had stayed with the expectation of accompanying her Ladyship to Wales, to attend the approaching anniversary of her College, having been invited thither the preceding year. But the Countess had formed the determination of excluding him from her pulpits so long as he held the sentiments discussed at the late conference, and accordingly wrote

to him to that effect. Mr. Wesley returned no reply to this communication, but left Bristol for Cornwall the next day; and never after preached in the chapels of Lady Huntingdon.

The day following her Ladyship's arrival at Brislington, being Sunday, Mr. Shirley and Mr. Venn preached to very large congregations at St. George's Church, Kingswood, and at St. James's, Bristol. On the 21st Lady Huntingdon, Lady Anne Erskine, Miss Orton, Mr. Ireland, Mr. Lloyd, and the ministers who accompanied her, went to Trevecca, and were received by Mr. Fletcher, Mr. William Williams, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Peter Williams, Mr. Howel Harris, and several lay preachers and exhorters. At nine the next morning the Sacrament was administered by Mr. Shirley, and at ten Mr. Fletcher preached in the chapel. At two Mr. Venn gave an exhortation to the students, and at four Mr. Howel Harris preached in the court to a large congregation. The Sacrament was administered by Mr. Venn on Thursday morning. At ten Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Williams preached in the court; Mr. Shirley examined the students and gave an exhortation at two o'clock; and at four Mr. Peter Williams preached in the chapel, whilst some of the exhorters addressed the crowd in the court. In the evening Mr. Berridge arrived at the College, and several persons from the surrounding country, so that the concourse of people the next morning was exceedingly great.

At six o'clock in the morning of the 24th of August, a public prayer-meeting was held in the chapel, to implore the benediction of the great Head of the Church upon the College, the benevolent foundress, and all those ministers of Christ who laboured with her in the sacred cause of God and truth. Notwithstanding the early hour at which this meeting was held, it was very numerously attended, and the heavenly influence which rested upon the congregation was generally regarded as "a token for good," and as a delightful prelude to what might be expected during the religious services connected with the anniversary.—Messrs. Rowlands, Williams, Harris, and Berridge severally engaged in this delightful exercise: after which the Sacrament was administered by Mr. Fletcher, as president of the College, first to the clergymen, *ten* of whom were present on this occasion, then to the students, Lady Huntingdon, and her Ladyship's household, and after to the congregation, great numbers of whom communicated in the dying love of their Lord and Saviour.

Public service commenced at ten o'clock, when a vast concourse of people collected from all parts. A scaffold was erected in the court, on which all the clergy, dissenting ministers, lay preachers, and students sat. Mr. Fletcher read the prayers of

the Established Church, with a selection from the Old and New Testament, suitable to the occasion. Mr. Peter Williams, of Caermarthen, then, in devout and fervent prayer, implored the divine blessing on the minister who was about to preach—that he might be faithful to God, faithful to himself, and faithful to the souls of his hearers—and on the congregation, that they might hear us for eternity, and give all diligence to the things which belonged to their everlasting peace, looking up to the Father of light, beseeching him to give “all the words of this life” an abundant entrance into their hearts.

The vast assembly then sung with the most animated devotion—

“Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!

Thine own immortal strength put on,” &c.

After which Mr. Shirley ascended the pulpit and preached an excellent discourse, highly appropriate to the occasion, from 1 Cor. i. 21, “For after that, in the wisdom of God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe.” When he had concluded, Mr. William Williams preached in Welsh till one o’clock. At two they all dined; and during the interval between the public services, the people continued to sing and pray, both in the chapel and the court. Service commenced at three, when Mr. Berridge enforced the example and success of the primitive ministers of Christ, from Mark xiv. 20, “They went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the words with signs following.” When he had concluded, Mr. Rowlands addressed the assembled multitude in Welsh, in his accustomed eloquent and powerfully energetic manner. His text was from 1 Cor. i. 23, “We preach Christ crucified;” from which he pointed out the subject matter of every Christian minister’s preaching—the wisdom and goodness of God in commanding the Gospel, of which Christ crucified was the sum and substance, to be preached “every where”—the adaptation of the Gospel to the condition of man, and its promulgation the appointed means for the conversion of sinners, and finally, the still binding commission of their once crucified, but risen and exalted Master, and the promise of his gracious presence “to the end of the world.”

In the evening Mr. Venn addressed the students, ministers, and lay preachers who were assembled at the College on this occasion, from 2 Tim. iv. 2, “Preach the word—be instant in season and out of season.” From these words he enforced the absolute necessity of zealously and faithfully preaching the truth as it is in Jesus—of being ever ready to go forth at all seasons

to proclaim the words of eternal life—and the importance of a constant feeling of entire dependence upon the promised influence of the Spirit to “confirm the words with signs following,” and support them under every difficulty and every trial which they might be called to endure in the faithful discharge of the ministry which they had received of the Lord. Mr. Fletcher concluded with prayer to the great Head of His Church and people, for the especial outpouring of his Spirit upon the various services connected with the anniversary—upon the College, that it might prove a lasting blessing to the Church of Christ, and be mighty, through God, to the pulling down the strongholds of Satan—upon its noble foundress, that the love of the Saviour might burn brighter and stronger on the altar of her heart, and that she might long be spared to reap with joy the fruits of her generous and disinterested labours—and upon the ministers and students, that they might prove polished shafts in the Redeemer’s quiver, zealous, active, and laborious in extending the knowledge of their divine Master, and in the last great day be found at his right hand, and hear him pronounce the meed of approbation, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.”

Thus terminated the second anniversary of her Ladyship’s College. The most delightful spirit of piety and brotherly affection prevailed during the whole of this interesting period; and the gracious presence of God was largely experienced by all. The congregations were unusually large and deeply attentive; and a blessed influence from on high rested upon the assembled multitudes. At seven o’clock the next morning a prayer-meeting was held in the chapel, when Messrs. Shirley, Venn, Berridge, and Fletcher commended themselves and brethren in the ministry to the blessing of God before they departed to their respective places of abode. Soon after, Lady Huntingdon and suite left Trevecca for Berwick, the seat of Thomas Powys, Esq., in Shropshire. The next day, being Sunday, Mr. Venn preached in the morning to a large number of persons, and in the afternoon Mr. Berridge addressed a more numerous congregation from those solemn words, “As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.” Lady Huntingdon next proceeded to Worcester, where she remained a few days, and then went forward to Bristol, where she had the satisfaction to meet Mr. Charles Wesley, who shortly after accompanied her to Bath, and preached several times in the chapel.

Lady Huntingdon’s sphere of usefulness becoming every year more and more extensive, her expenses were consequently greatly

augmented. Though she expended very frequently every farthing of her income, still it was inadequate to the demands made on her boundless liberality; and but for the occasional assistance which Mr. Thornton, Lady Glenorchy, Lady Chesterfield, Miss Orton, and others afforded, she would sometimes have been involved in difficulties. It was about this time that she received a *second* gift from Mr. Thornton of *five hundred pounds* towards defraying the expenses of the College. From Lady Glenorchy, Lady Chesterfield, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Ireland, and Miss Orton, she likewise received very considerable sums, amounting to nearly *one thousand pounds*, which enabled her Ladyship to pursue those plans for promoting the spiritual happiness of her fellow-creatures, the accomplishment of which yielded the highest gratification to her benevolent heart.

The letter of Lady Glenorchy on this occasion is worthy of preservation, as it presents the piety, generosity, and liberal views of that excellent woman in an interesting light. It is dated

“Edinburgh, Jan. 10th, 1771.

“My dear Madam,—I received your letter of the 19th ultimo, and thank you a thousand times for all your kindness and friendly advice. I bless God for the light and comfort which your Ladyship has been instrumental in conveying to my mind, and esteem it a high privilege to write to one so devoted to the best of causes, and so willing to communicate to others the blessings of the everlasting Gospel.

“I am rejoiced at the success which has attended the College; and of your very extensive field of labour. I long to be more actively engaged for God, but hitherto my way has been greatly hedged up. When the weather permits, I frequently visit the poor, and find much liberty and pleasure in speaking for God; but am penetrated with shame at my ignorance and weakness. I am constantly surrounded by persons who have no relish for these things, which is very hurtful to my soul. Miss Hill was a great source of comfort to me, and I regret her absence exceedingly. I saw Mr. Townsend yesterday; his conversation was edifying and refreshing. His ministry has been astonishingly blessed in Edinburgh; and I feel grateful to your Ladyship for his continuing so long with us. Knowing the many demands on your generosity, I beg your acceptance of the enclosed for *four hundred pounds*, which you will oblige me by expending in advancing that glorious cause which my heart longs to serve; and at the same time allow me to repeat what I have already assured your Ladyship, that my purse is always at your command, as I feel persuaded that the Lord smiles upon your plans of usefulness, and will crown them with his blessing.

“I expect Mr. De Courcy very soon, and trust the Lord will accompany him, and make him useful to many in the city. Your Ladyship's account of what occurred at Mr. Wesley's last conference does not surprise me. I have since seen the Minutes, and must bear my feeble testimony against the sentiments contained in them. May the Lord

God of Israel be with you, and enable you to make a firm stand in defence of a free-grace Gospel. Lady Anne's letter has told me all you have been doing in this momentous affair. When you next write to dear Mr. Shirley give my kindest regards to him, and also to Mr. Venn, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Romaine. From what Lady Anne says, I fear very much for Mr. Fletcher that he will be carried off by Mr. Wesley's influence. What will be the end of this business I know not. May we be kept by the mighty power of God unto the day of salvation. I know Mr. Wesley is greatly displeased with me, though I have always countenanced his preachers; but now I find this cannot be done by me any longer. Nevertheless I respect him highly, and pray that he may be led in the way of truth. Good Lady Maxwell rejoices in the success attending your efforts; she begs her Christian regards may be conveyed to your Ladyship, and desires me to assure you, though personally unknown to each other, that she feels a union of spirit with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, though they differ in some points from her, and esteems it her bounden duty to pray that the Lord may strengthen your hands, and make you eminently useful in your day and generation.

"Truly I have need of your Ladyship's prayers. With my whole soul I bless the Lord for the numberless mercies he has bestowed upon me, of the least of which I am utterly unworthy. Blessed be his name, I feel every day more power to believe, and more inclination and relish for spiritual things. Yet, alas! I am so unprofitable, that I wonder I have not long since been cut down as a cumberer of the ground. Lord, I desire to be wholly thine, and to sacrifice health, fortune, reputation, and even life itself, if I may but be counted worthy to suffer for thee!

"I cease not to pray that the Lord may bless your Ladyship with every spiritual blessing, and repay a thousand-fold the maternal tenderness and affection you have so often bestowed on your truly grateful and singularly indebted friend and servant, in the bonds of the everlasting Gospel,

"W. GLENORCHY."

That part of Lady Huntingdon's answer which relates to the generous contribution of Lady Glenorchy for the benefit of the College, we transcribe here; the remainder will be found in another chapter:—

"I am indeed bound to thank your Ladyship most sincerely for your generous gift to the College, which has been the offspring of many tears and strong crying to the great and glorious Head of the Church. This is surely one of the effects of that blessed faith wrought in your heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. Every token, expression, and act of love in obedience to the new commandment is acceptable to the Lord. Your many noble and benevolent works I doubt not spring from faith in the Lord Jesus, and are done out of love to Christ, to his people, for the truth's sake that dwelleth in them, and because they belong to Christ. These are the works which will be remembered and recompensed at the resurrection of the just. The College is in a most

glorious state. The unction of the Holy One is continually descending on all its beloved inmates, and the love and harmony that reigns amongst them all it is most delightful to witness. Fired with a zeal for God and perishing souls, all seem determined, in their strength, to spend and be spent in this divine employ. The College, as dear Mr. Berridge says, has been baptized with the baptism of the Holy Ghost; great grace rests upon all within its walls, and eminent success crowns their labours in the towns and villages around. To God alone be all the glory!—the work is his—and he will carry it on in his own way. His smiles of approbation have cheered my heart amidst the many labours, cares, and sorrows I have to contend with. I thirst for an entire devotedness to him, and his cause and interest in the world. O that I had a thousand hands, a thousand hearts, all should be employed for Him—for *He is WORTHY*. Sing, O my soul, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!*"

The third anniversary of the College was attended by greater crowds than the preceding year. On the 20th of August Messrs. Shirley, Roquet, Johnson, Hart, Browne, Ireland, and Lloyd set off for Trevecca. The next day they were joined by Messrs. Rowlands, Williams, Jones, Owen, and several clergymen from England, so that this year there were fourteen clergymen present, independent of several Dissenting ministers, exhorters, and lay preachers. Messrs. Shirley, Roquet, and Browne were the preachers. Much of the divine presence was felt and enjoyed; and all returned to their respective abodes under a deep sense of their infinite obligations to free and sovereign grace: and a holy determination on the part of all the ministers who were present on this occasion to preach the Gospel more zealously than they had hitherto done, and endeavour by every means in their power to spread the savour of divine truth among the careless and unawakened.*

* Among the pupils introduced into the work of the ministry by means of this Institution were the following:—

Adams.....	Salisbury	Clark	Cheadle, Staffordshire
Aldridge	Jewry-street, London	Clayton	Weigh-house, London
Atley	Stepney	Cook	South Carolina
Austen	Great Wakering, Essex	Cosson	Ditto
Barnard	Hull	Crole	Pinners' Hall
Beard	Scarborough	Cureton	Newcastle
Beaufoy	Town Sutton	Davis	Yeovil
Bennet	Birmingham	Dawson	Sheffield
Best	Curate of Cradley	Denham	Walworth
Boddily	America	Derbyshire ...	
Bradley	Manchester	Dunn	
Broadey	Bessel's Green, Kent	Ellis	Woburn
Browning ...	Wrington	English	Reading, and Homerton
Bryant	Sheffield	Eyre	
Bryson	London	French	
Burn	St. Mary's, Birmingham	Ford	Stepney
Cambridge		Giles	North America.

Soon after the anniversary Lady Huntingdon made a tour in Wales with Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Williams. On the 28th of August she went to Brecknock, where she spent two days, and on the 31st proceeded to Caermarthen. At each of those places Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Williams preached to large congregations both in the churches and in the open air. From thence her Ladyship went to Haverfordwest on the 2nd of September, and in the evening Mr. Rowlands preached in St. Martin's churchyard to a numerous and deeply attentive audience. At Swansea Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Williams preached to very numerous con-

Glazebrook...	Warrington	Pearse.....	Truro
Gray		Phease.....	
Griffiths	Aston, Berks	Phillips	
Griffiths	Coleford, Gloucester	Phillips, D....	Norwich
Harris	Curate of Stanmore	Platt	London
Harris	Fordham, Essex	Porter	Highbate
Hawkesworth	United Brethren	Price	St. Paul's, Blackburn
Hayes	North America	Pritchard.....	
Herdsmen....	South Petherton	Richards	Baltimore, N. A.
Honeywill ...	Melksham	Ralph	Bristol
Honeywood...		Richardson...	
Hull		Roby.....	Manchester
Hupton.....	Claxton, Norfolk	Roberts	South Carolina
Hyde		Rowlands ...	Gainsborough
Jenkins	Lewes	Rowley	Warwick
Johnson	Manchester	Sedcole	London
Jones, Dr.....	Edinburgh	Shenstone ...	
Jones, T.....	Oathall	Stephens	
Jones, W. ...		Smith	Leather-lane, London
Jones, J.	Lincoln	Shutter	
Jones, T.....		Stumphousen	Clack
Jones, W. ...		Tessier.....	Chatteris
Jones, L.....	Durham	Thorn.....	Enfield
Kirkman.....	Islington	Thorrer	
Leggatt	Burwash	Thresher	Abingdon
Lewis	South Sea Islands	Townsend ...	Ramsgate
Lloyd	Swansea	Tyler	Vicar, Ashby, Lincoln
M'All	London	Vaughan	Yeovil
May		Underwood...	Bristol
Mays.....		Waring.....	Coleford, Gloucester
Mantell	Swindon	Wase.....	
Mead	St. John's, Wapping	Watkins	
Meldrum		White	South Petherton
Meyer.....	Artillery-lane, London	Whitefoot ...	Enfield
Mills	Walworth	Wildbore	Penryn
Mollond		Wilks	Tabernacle, London
Moore		Wilks	Norwich
Morris.....	Monmouthshire	Williams	
Moss	Narberth, South Wales	Williams	Stepney
Munn	Jamaica	Williams	Gate-street, London
Munn, J.....		Williams	
Newell	Great Missenden	Williams.....	Stone, Staffordshire
Newborn.....	Wachett	Winkworth...	St. Saviour's, South-
Parish	Sheffield	Wren	York [wark
Parish	Rednall, Birmingham	Young.....	Margate
Parsons	Leeds		

gregations in the open air. On the 15th her Ladyship was at Mr. Bowen's, at Languire, where she spent a few days. Here she was joined by Mr. Pugh, who had been at the anniversary of the college, and whose living was but a short distance from Languire. It being Sunday, Mr. Pugh read prayers at Newport, and Mr. Rowlands preached to a deeply serious congregation. In the evening Mr. Williams preached in the open air to an immense multitude, many of whom appeared much affected. Lady Huntingdon arrived at Trevecca on the 20th, "filled with wonder and astonishment at the goodness of God her Saviour in preserving her in going out and coming in, and enabling her to carry the blessings of the Gospel to those who were sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death."

Previous to Lady Huntingdon's visit to Swansea, there was a great dearth of religious knowledge in that place. A few persons, Welsh and English, assembled together for prayer in a room in Castle-street. These, differing in language and sentiment, eventually separated, and formed distinct societies, and probably this gave rise to the Wesleyan and the Welsh Independent, as well as to the Countess's chapel. After this separation, those remaining were too poor to pay the rent, which was about three pounds per annum. The landlady demanded either that the rent should be paid in a week or the room quitted. It is often seen, as in the present case, that Divine Providence makes things, trivial in themselves, turn out to the furtherance of the Gospel. Among these poor people was one of the name of Benjamin Tucker, a man filling a menial situation, yet of singular piety. Being informed that he must either take the responsibility of defraying the expenses upon himself, or that it must be given up in a week, his mind was greatly distressed: he knew the power of prayer, and that man's extremity is God's opportunity. Overwhelmed in his spirits, he strolled down the bay as far as low-water mark, where, falling upon his knees, he prayed; nor did he pray in vain. Whilst engaged, the name of the venerable Countess rushed into his mind with such force that he was convinced it was an answer to prayer. Her Ladyship was then lodging at Britton Ferry, only a few miles from Swansea. On account of his humble circumstances he prevailed on a respectable farmer in the neighbourhood to write to her Ladyship. No reply being given, Tucker at length waited personally upon her. Having heard his statement, her Ladyship kindly consented to send a student from Trevecca every Sabbath. These continued to preach there twelve months, when it was thought that if a chapel were erected a congregation might be gathered. Tucker was the organ of communication. Her

*

Ladyship enquired how many members might be obtained to form a society? When informed *five*, she expressed her surprise that so amall a number should desire a chapel might be built; Tucker replied—"There were but few in Cornelius's house, but at his invitation more came, and while Peter preached the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard the word." The Countess, pleased with his Scriptural remark, promised to use her endeavours to build a chapel. She soon after paid another visit to Swansea. An elm-tree faced her lodgings in Chapel-street; here she directed a student, Mr. Thomas Jones, to preach: she opened her window and listened to the sermon. This venerable tree is standing, and is viewed with pleasing emotions by the elder members of the society.

On her Ladyship remarking that a room was sufficient, Tucker remonstrated, and, with his characteristic energy, declared that with hat in hand he would beg through the Principality if she would not comply. Her Ladyship yielded, and, through the interposition of Sir Herbert Mackworth, applied to the corporation for one of the sand-banks on the Burrows, which the corporation granted on a 40 years' lease, at a ground rent of 3l. 14s. 0d. per annum. A Mr. Jernegon agreed to build it for 450l. Afterwards he found that his contract was considerably too low to pay his expenses, when she honourably gave him another 100l. The foundation stone has, on a brass plate, the following inscription:

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
SELINA
COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON,
AT HER OWN EXPENSE, ERECTED THIS
HOUSE OF GOD,
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD, 1787.
WILLIAM JERNEGON, ARCHITECT.
REV. WILLIAM ALDRIDGE }
AND } LAID THIS STONE.
BENJAMIN TUCKER, }

Its dimensions are sixty feet by forty: its style Gothic. It was opened April 5th, 1789. In the morning the Rev. Mr. Rowlands read prayers, and the Rev. David Jones, rector of Langan, and the Rev. William Taylor, one of her Ladyship's chaplains, preached. The text of the latter was, "Mine eyes and my heart shall be thine perpetually." In the evening Mr. Taylor read prayers, and Mr. Rowlands preached in Welsh and English. Mr. Taylor supplied the pulpit for a month, and was succeeded by the Rev. Dr. Ford, and the Rev. Messrs. Harris, M'All, Clark, Kenneford, Camidge, Chamberlain, Jones, and others. The following paragraph, copied from a Bristol paper of March, 1791, indicates the kind feeling that was entertained towards

this newly erected place of worship, and the good results which appeared:—

“The chapel lately built by the Countess of Huntingdon at Swansea, promises fair to be a blessing to that neighbourhood. The abilities of the worthy minister who now preaches there are truly great, and have been made eminently useful; his discourses are delivered with becoming solemnity and graceful freedom, and flow not as from a barren head or an unfeeling heart, but indicate all the pathos of a soul devoutly panting after the advancement of the glory of God in the salvation of sinners, and establishing the Church of God in faith, holiness, and love.”

In 1796 the late Rev. William Kemp became the pastor, and continued to labour there with pleasing tokens of success for twenty-five years, when, at the earnest request of the Trustees of Cheshunt College, he removed to fill the important station of theological tutor to that institution. He was succeeded by the Rev. David Jones, whose valuable services were interrupted by a long and serious indisposition. Continued ill-health obliged him, though unwillingly, to resign his charge in May, 1825. He died the following autumn, since which it has been supplied by various ministers of the Connexion.*

The number of chapels and congregations in various parts of the kingdom were now increasing every year, and new invitations were daily made to her Ladyship to send the students to many places where darkness and ignorance prevailed. In order to attend to these much of her time was necessarily required at the College, from whence she was continually sending forth messengers of mercy to proclaim the glad tidings of great joy, that there is a Saviour, even Christ the Lord. From this period, therefore, to the close of her active and laborious course, Lady Huntingdon spent a considerable portion of every year at Trevecca. Whilst there she was very frequently visited by ministers of eminence and respectability belonging to the Principality, as well as by those from distant parts of the kingdom. No character, eminent for religion, knew her, by whom she was not highly esteemed. Among her very intimate friends must be reckoned that man of God, the Rev. Edmund Jones, minister of Ebenezer

* There is a recent circumstance in the history of this chapel which calls for distinct notice, and for grateful acknowledgment to God for the signal proof of his gracious interposition. It appears that Lady Huntingdon was disappointed in having so short a lease as forty years. In the year 1822, only five years before the expiration of the lease, the corporation was desirous of making a new road by the side of the chapel, and offered the trustees a new lease for 99 years as a compensation for the ground on one side of the chapel, which was readily granted. Subsequently, a school-room has been erected on a part of the vacant ground which still remained.

Chapel, near Pontypool, in the parish of Trevathian, South Wales. This venerable man lived almost a century, a faithful servant of God, and the peculiar care of heaven. With Lady Huntingdon he maintained a constant correspondence, and whenever she came into Wales *the good old Prophet* (for that was the name he bore) spent some time with her at the College at Trevecca. His memory is still dear to many of the surviving students of that seminary who were witnesses of his undissembled seriousness. He generally preached once a day during his visit: indeed it was his grand object, whenever he came, to diffuse a savour of divine and eternal things. Whoever was favoured with his company was always the better for it. He lived at the gates of heaven himself, and thither also he constantly endeavoured to bring all his friends. His person was of the middle size, his eye remarkably penetrating, and the dignity of an apostle was stamped upon his countenance, which was the index of his heart, and commanded respect wherever he made his appearance. His mode of preaching was strictly puritanical; his voice was rather feeble, and his delivery slow; his doctrines were purely evangelical, and his discourses enriched with Christian experience.

Never was any man more highly favoured in a matrimonial connexion than Mr. Jones. Mrs. Jones was a woman of eminent piety, and possessed of strong intellectual powers. In the apostolic age, when poverty was no reproach, she would have been esteemed a Christian of the most exalted character. They were married when young, and their affection increased with their years. What the good old man felt at the loss of such a wife it is impossible for words to describe. Though she died twenty years before him, he scarcely ever mentioned her name but tears involuntarily flowed from his eyes. When contemplating the joys of heaven, he frequently anticipated the pleasing interview with (as he continued to call her) "his dearly beloved spouse." "I would not (said he once, in a conversation with Lady Huntingdon) for half a heaven, but find her there." The beauty of the marriage state was so conspicuous in this happy pair, and made so powerful an impression on the mind of Mr. Whitefield, when on a visit at their house, that he immediately determined upon changing his condition, and soon after paid his addresses to a lady in that neighbourhood; but he had not the good fortune to find a *Mrs. Jones* in the object of his choice.

Lady Huntingdon was always highly delighted by his visits to Trevecca, and after one of these refreshing seasons wrote thus to a correspondent:—

"The dear good old Prophet has just left us. O what a blessed

saint of God!—how devoted! how lively! how active!—always athirst for full communion with the Father of Light! His heart-stirring addresses to the students, and his most fervent and energetic prayers for their success will surely leave a blessing behind them.”

Mr. Jones was remarkable not only as a wise instructor, but a powerful intercessor. Many experienced the benefit of his prayers. “As a prince he had power with God and with man, and prevailed.”

In 1773 the College was favoured with frequent visits from the Rev. David Jones, rector of Langan, a man of great eminence in his day, and for many years a constant preacher in the chapels of the Countess. The beginning of May her Ladyship wrote to Mr. Jones, by one of the students who was going to attend the Welsh Methodist Association, requesting him to renew his visits to Trevecca. It was her Ladyship’s intention to have been present at the meeting of the Association, but she was prevented by indisposition. After the meeting the young man returned to the College on trial, and brought the following letter from Mr. Jones:—

“Bridgend, May 14, 1773.

“My Lady—Your kind letter I received by the young man, for which I heartily thank your Ladyship. We should have been truly glad to have seen you at our Association. It was a very solemn day indeed. The Lord Jesus fulfilled his precious promise to his servants—“I will be with you.” Great power from on high attended the word preached. Many went home rejoicing: and who would not rejoice when the Captain of our salvation himself appeared in the field of battle, assuring the hearts of his poor people that he would conquer in and for them? I trust there were some also of the careless sort cut to the heart. Mr. Rowlands preached the second sermon in the morning, from Acts ix. 4, “And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Mr. William Williams preached before him. In the afternoon we had two sermons also. The first by Mr. William Lloyd, a lay-preacher, and the second by Mr. Peter Williams. Some of the people made our little town ring with *Gogonant i Fab Dafydd Hosanna trwy’r ne foedd*.* Your Ladyship does not want Welsh interpreters. *Hosanna hefyd trwy’r Dæar, Dæar. Amen, Amen.*† Mr. Rowlands preached the next day at a little town, about twelve miles west of us, where he had a sweet opportunity indeed. He spoke wonderfully on Abraham *looking up*: Gen. xxii. 13. I never heard such a sermon before. Surely he is the greatest preacher in Europe. May the Lord own him more and more. That little town also rang with *Gogoniant*. Keep on, blessed Jesus, to ride triumphantly through our land. Fill our cold hearts with thy love, then we shall praise thee from shore to shore.

* Glory be to the son of David—Hosanna through the heavens.

† Hosanna also through the earth, Amen, Amen.

"My poor wife, who enjoys but a poor state of health, desires to join with me in Christian love and respect to your Ladyship; and we hope the Lord will bless and preserve you long in this world for his own great glory. We rejoice to hear that you are enabled to hold up your head like a brave soldier in your *present* situation. As thy day is, *so shall thy strength be*.

"In a week's time I intend setting out on a journey through Pembrokeshire: probably it will be my last, as they are soon to have a settled minister among them, Mr. William Davies, of Neath.

"I intend giving myself the pleasure, if the Lord preserve my health, of calling on your Ladyship before the end of this summer. If I can contrive to stay over a Sunday, I shall give your Welsh neighbours a sermon at your Ladyship's chapel.

"The young man is to bring this. I hope the Lord will greatly bless him in his studies. I believe him to be very honest in his sphere: whether he is cut out for the College or no, I can't pretend to judge: you will find that during the time of his trial, I wish he may turn out to your Ladyship's satisfaction: and am, my honoured and dear Lady, humbly and dutifully yours,

D. JONES.

"P.S. The following lines I throw at the feet of your Ladyship's young men. Let them try their talents, and render a just translation of them in verse* for their worthy Patroness. They were written by Mr. William Williams, and are very sweet to an afflicted soul."

"Rive yn terfynn
Nol pwyso oll ynghyd,
Mæ cyfnewidiol ydyw Dyn,
Ond Dnw Sydd Un o hyd;
Ar ei ffyddlondeb ef,
Sy'n noddfa grefir gwaw,
Mi greda dor mhen gronyu bach
O'r tounaw'n jack ir law."

That most zealous and faithful servant of the Lord, Howel Harris, often favoured the College with his public preaching, and the students with his counsel. Here also the most eminent

* The following translation of these lines was made by Mrs. Blomfield, the wife of Mr. Blomfield, who had his education at her Ladyship's College at Cheshunt:—

"Alas! how vain is mortal man,
How fickle he appears!
How fast he hastens to the tomb,
Which terminates his years!
So said my soul, when great distress
Like waves burst o'er my head;
But God for ever is the same—
Who shall my footsteps lead.
He my unchanging refuge is,
Nor will my prayer despise;
I know he'll save—I'll trust his grace
To raise me to the skies."

evangelical clergymen and dissenting ministers frequently addressed immense congregations. The anniversary was always remarkably well attended during the life-time of the noble Foundress. Great multitudes were attracted thither on these occasions, and it often proved a singular blessing to many who were then called to the happy experience of the salvation of Jesus. The anniversary services of 1774 and 1776 were particularly interesting, from the great number of clergymen who attended, and the mighty blessings which descended upon the assembled multitudes. The following letter was written by one who was present on that most interesting occasion, an extract or two from which we insert in this place, as we doubt not but it will gratify the hearts of many:—

“Trevecca, August, 1774.

“I do not mean to confine myself to the transactions of the 24th instant, which was more properly the anniversary day, but will tell you all I can recollect of the blessed opportunities I have been favoured with since I came here. On Sunday morning Mr. White and one of the students preached from Psalm cxxxii. 15, ‘I will abundantly bless her provisions,’ &c. He spoke very excellently of the abundant blessing which God hath provided for his church, and that every poor member thereof should be satisfied with the bread of life. In the evening Mr. English preached from Daniel ix. 24, ‘To make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.’ On Monday evening Mr. Crole exhorted from Psalm xlv. 5. ‘Thy arrows are sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies.’ He was led to speak much of the depravity of the human heart. On Tuesday evening the people flocked in great numbers to the College: Mr. Peter Williams preached partly in English and partly in Welsh. About nine arrived Messrs. Peckwell, Eccles, Coupland, Keene, Lloyd, and Stones from Bath, and Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Williams, two eminent Welsh ministers, who had been preaching in the neighbourhood. Mr. Woolmer, an independent minister from Bristol, was here also. He preached on Wednesday morning. After this I believe 300 people breakfasted together. Then Mr. Williams preached in English and Welsh, and after him Mr. Rowlands. I lost all benefit of these two excellent discourses, not being able to understand Welsh. I think we may be allowed to form some sort of judgment from the appearance of the people, who seemed greatly affected. I could distinguish many very hearty Amens, and a frequent crying, ‘Glory to God.’

“And now, my esteemed friend, I will tell you a little of the ministers who brought us bread, I mean first Mr. Peckwell. He taught us from Revelations, v. 9. ‘And they sung a new song, saying thou art worthy to take the book,’ &c. He observed we were redeemed from the various sins by which we were enslaved, unbelief, pride, self-love, a too great attachment to and fear of our kindred, which often weighed us down to earth and clogged our affections that they could not aspire after Christ; and here he spoke of the many things which the soul

would often be delighted with, rather than with God : and most awfully of the dangerous consequences of esteeming any thing superior to him. He then in a suitable manner addressed the Welsh, and told them he wished he could speak to them in their own language, so as to be understood, for he would gladly have them know that God rejected no nation. He uttered a few words in Welsh, with which the people seem quite delighted.

“ When Mr. Peckwell had concluded, all went to dinner. The ministers and most respectable part of the congregation dined with Lady Huntingdon, and the rest of the multitude dined at her Ladyship's expense. After dinner Mr. Coupland preached, and when he had finished Mr. Peter Williams took his place. Sermon being concluded, about fifty persons took tea with Lady Huntingdon, after which there was a love-feast. Mr. Davies, Mr. Peckwell, and Mr. Woolmer exhorted the people, and Mr. Coupland prayed. I wish that by a recital of these things it was possible for me to convey to you some idea of that great power which was so sensibly felt at this blessed season : but, alas ! it is a power that may be felt, yet cannot be expressed in an adequate manner, much less conveyed, if it cannot be related. The love-feast concluded about nine ; and from this time to eleven I think every room in the house was converted into a chapel, preaching in one, praying in another, exhorting and singing hymns in others. O what a beloved sight ! and how different from the generality of the world, who live as if every part of them was mortal, or as if they could partake of the pleasures of the world and yet be in the high-road to heaven. Glory be to God, if He have, and I trust He hath, given us a relish for joys superior to the beggarly elements of a perishing world. O, may we constantly be engaged through a grace to tread it under our feet, and spurn at every thing it can offer us in exchange for Christ ! But this is a digression from the account I mean to furnish.

“ On Thursday morning Mr. Coupland preached from Luke xv. 2, ‘ This man receiveth sinners.’ And in the evening Mr. Peckwell favoured us again from Ezekiel ix. 6, ‘ Come not near any man upon whom is the mark.’ In a most powerful manner he reasoned upon the safety of God's children, enumerated many instances from Scripture to prove his peculiar care for their safety, and particularly mentioned in this chapter, that though such a few, yet these few must be secured before the city could be destroyed. He said, their being marked in the forehead was to denote that the mark of God's children must be seen : that we must not only profess, but live as Christians. In this discourse he very awfully addressed the students and ministers of the Gospel to be faithful to God and to their own souls.”

“ After this sermon we had the sacrament : Lady Huntingdon, and a few with her, received first, and then about *thirty* of the students. Mr. Peckwell renewed his exhortation and charged the students afresh, as in the more immediate presence of God, strictly to examine their hearts, and, as he had called them to be ministers of the Gospel, begged they might be willing to spend and be spent in the cause of Christ. A more solemn season I never remember. The evening closed with prayer. On Friday morning Mr. Coupland preached on our Lord's

inquiry of Peter whether he loved him, and his charge for him to feed his lambs and his sheep. This was a most comfortable opportunity. The Lord was present, not only in the place, but, I believe, powerfully felt in every heart. Mr. Coupland spoke very awfully, and in a most striking manner to the students who had dedicated themselves to the ministry, and prayed for them with the utmost affection. I wish I could recollect the expressions he made use of in telling them the Searcher of Hearts was acquainted with their different trials and temptations as ministers; and that they must beg of him to undertake for them, and to impart grace and strength proportionate to their day. I know you join in a hearty Amen that the petitions may be fulfilled.

"On Friday evening Mr. Newborn, a student, preached from these weighty words: 'Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' He told us what it was to be born again; being a change of heart, which would consequently produce a change of affections, of temper, of life, &c., and very powerfully did he enforce the necessity of this change, as that without it we could not see, much less inherit as a state in the kingdom of God. He described heaven, and that the nearer we lived unto God, the more we should enjoy the kingdom of heaven whilst on earth. This sermon concluded the anniversary; but I hope the life and power of God are not departed from the souls of the people."

Mr. Toplady's letter to Mr. Hussey contains an interesting narrative of the anniversary of Lady Huntingdon's College in 1776:—

"Broad Hembury, Sept. 9, 1776.

"Very dear Sir,—A student of Lady Huntingdon's, whose name is Cottingham, and from whom I parted at Bristol on my return from Wales, promised me to wait on you and Mrs. Hussey in London, to inform you how gracious the Lord has been to me ever since I saw you last.

"The night I left town the Worcester coach in which I went broke down; but not one of us received the least injury. I have a still greater deliverance to acquaint you with; even such as, I trust, will never be blotted from my thankful remembrance. On the anniversary day in Wales, the congregation was so large that the chapel would not have contained a fourth part of the people, who were supposed to amount to *three thousand*. No fewer than *one thousand three hundred horses* were turned into one large field adjoining the College, besides what were stationed in the neighbouring villages. The carriages, also, were unusually numerous. A scaffold was erected at one end of the College-court, on which a book-stand was placed, by way of pulpit, and thence six or seven of us preached, successively, to one of the most attentive and most lively congregations I ever beheld. When it came to my turn to preach, I advanced to the front, and had not gone more than half way through my prayer before sermon, when the scaffold suddenly fell in. As I stood very near the higher-most step (and the steps did not fall with the rest), Providence enabled me to keep on my feet, through the assistance of Mr. Winkworth, who

laid fast hold on my arm. About *forty* ministers were on the scaffold and steps when the former broke down. Dear Mr. Shirley fell undermost of all, but received no other hurt than a very slight bruise on one of his thighs. A good woman, who for the conveniency of hearing had placed herself under the scaffold, received a trifling contusion on her face. No other mischief was done. The congregation, though greatly alarmed, had the prudence not to throw themselves into outward disorder ; which, I believe, was chiefly owing to the powerful sense of God's presence, which was eminently felt by most of the assembly.

"Such was the wonderful goodness of the Lord to me that I was not in the least disconcerted on this dangerous occasion : which, I mention to the praise of that grace and providence without which a much smaller incident would inevitably have shocked every nerve I have. About half a minute after the interruption had commenced, I had the satisfaction to inform the people that no damage had ensued : and removing for security to a lower step, I thanked the Lord, with the rejoicing multitude, for having so undeniably given his angels charge concerning us. Prayer ended, I was enabled to preach, and great grace seemed to be upon us all.

"If God permit, I hope to be with you, in London, soon after the middle of this month. I deem it one of the principal felicities of my life, that I have the happiness and the honour to minister to a praying people. We should not have had so much of the Lord's presence in Orange Street, if he had not poured upon us the spirit of supplication. Go on to pray, and God will go on to bless. Remember me most respectfully and most tenderly to as many of our dear friends in Christ as you are acquainted with, and particularly inform Mr. and Mrs. Willett and Mr. and Mrs. Stokes that I have not forgot my promise to write to them ; and that I will perform my promise, unless they are so kind as to dispense with it ; which I am very sure they would most willingly do if they knew how little time I have to myself.

"Farewell. Grace be with you, and with dear Mrs. Hussey. Grace comprehends all we want, in time and in eternity. I remain, my valuable friend, ever, ever yours, AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

"P.S. I had the happiness to see dear Lady Huntingdon (who is the most precious saint of God I ever knew) well both in body and soul. The Lord, I trust, still continues with you at Orange-street chapel. I shall be much obliged to you for informing me how things go on, by a line directed to me, at Mr. Derham's, in Green-street, Bath ; for which place I intend to set out from Devonshire, on Monday next, the 16th instant. I have the unutterable satisfaction to find several more awakened people at Broad Hembury than I formerly knew of. The Lord never sends his Gospel to any place in vain. He will call on his own people, and will accomplish his own work. There is really a very precious remnant in and about this parish. Thanks to free grace for all."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

History of the Chapel at Tunbridge Wells—Mr. Venn and Mr. Madan preach in the open air—Extracts from Lady Huntingdon's letters—Mr. Whitefield visits Tunbridge Wells—Messrs. Shipman and Matthews preach there—Illness of Lady Huntingdon—Illness of Mr. Whitefield—Mr. Venn—Mr. Newton—Mr. Thornton—Preaching at Lady Huntingdon's—A condemned criminal—Opening of the Chapel by Mr. Whitefield and Mr. De Courcy—Mrs. Althens—Chapel at Margate—Mr. Aldridge—Mr. Cooke—Mrs. Horsley—Chapels at Dover—Folkstone—Deal—Dr. Carter—Mrs. Elizabeth Carter and Miss Talbot—Lady Huntingdon's observations on Mrs. Carter's opinions—Charles and Edward Perronet—Chapel at Canterbury—Mr. Aldridge—Dr. Povah—Mr. Maddock—his death—The Unwin family and Cowper the poet—Mrs. Major Cowper—Mr. Unwin preaches at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel—Mr. David Simpson—Mr. Taylor.

CELEBRATED for its waters, Tunbridge Wells was remarkable for little else than the ignorance and profaneness of its inhabitants. As a place of public resort for the affluent, the gay, and the invalid, it became one of the most distinguished spots in the kingdom. In this benighted place the sabbath was openly profaned, and the most holy things contemptuously trampled under foot; even the restraints of decency were violently broken through, and the external form of religion held up as a subject of ridicule. This general description of the inhabitants of Tunbridge Wells must not, however, be indiscriminately applied to every individual among them: exceptions there were to this prevailing character, but they were comparatively few indeed.

That something should be attempted towards the conversion of this people was Lady Huntingdon's most anxious wish, and seemed to be the general desire of all those whom she consulted. Commencements so auspicious as those at Brighton and Oathall, confirmed and encouraged her hopes in this most desirable enterprise. Accordingly, in the summer of 1763, her Ladyship went thither, accompanied by Mr. Madan and Mr. Venn. Some attempts had been made to introduce the Gospel to this resort of fashion, about this time by Sir Thomas I'Anson, who resided in the neighbourhood, and had occasional preaching in his house. By this means attention was excited, and many were anxious to enjoy the blessings of the everlasting Gospel. The chapel belonging to the Established Church having been refused, Mr.

Madan and Mr. Venn preached in the large Presbyterian place of worship, which was freely lent on this occasion, and in which Mr. Wesley and others had also preached. But spacious as this place was, it was insufficient to contain the numbers who wished to hear, and Mr. Madan and Mr. Venn were encouraged by Lady Huntingdon to address the assembled multitudes in the open air. This was a new and extraordinary occurrence at Tunbridge Wells, and created no small stir. Whilst Mr. Venn was enforcing that gracious invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," a man in the congregation, not far from where the preacher stood, dropped down and instantly expired. This circumstance caused a general sensation, of which Mr. Venn very judiciously availed himself, and with great energy and warmth exhorted them to seek the Lord while he might be found, and to call upon Him while he was near:—

"So strong and general an influence (observes Lady Huntingdon) on a congregation I seldom remember to have seen. Many were melted to tears, and seemed resolved to fly from the wrath to come. Dear Mr. Venn was most solemn and impressive; the word came with power, and the arrows of conviction stuck in the hearts of many."

When Mr. Venn had concluded, the people lingered around the spot, as if unwilling to depart. Lady Huntingdon observing this, urged Mr. Madan to address a few words to the congregation:—

"Many (says her Ladyship) wept under the word, and a general concern seemed to pervade the assembly. The event of this day is a manifest indication that the Lord hath a people in this place. It hath pleased him to give a successful entrance to his Gospel—the time, the set time is evidently come, and this people are to be brought under the sound of salvation. O that hundreds, nay thousands, may answer the call of the new-creating voice! I have waited on the Lord, and sought the leadings of his Providence in this matter; and I did not visit Tunbridge Wells till I was confidently assured that he had called me there. The fields are white already to harvest. May the precious name of Him who died to save be made very dear to many in this place; and may this grain of mustard seed become, by the blessing of God, a flourishing tree, extending its branches far and wide."

Her Ladyship's active endeavours, which proceeded from true zeal for the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ, and which, like the beams of the sun, passed with unabating alacrity from place to place, from town to town, from city to city, soon ripened into execution. In the year 1768 she procured a permanent residence in that part of Tunbridge Wells usually called Mount Ephraim; and in the month of May received a visit from Mr.

Whitefield, then on his way to Lewes and Brighton. He preached twice in the open air,—nor did he preach in vain:—

“Very many (says her Ladyship) were cut to the heart—sinners trembled exceedingly before the Lord, and a universal impression seemed to abide upon the multitude. Truly God was in the midst of us to wound and to heal. Such happy indications of the approbation of God induce me to hope that He will deign to smile on my humble efforts for the glory of his great name and the good of the people of this place, and ultimately crown them with distinguished success. Conscious that every effort is impotent without his Almighty aid, I cry continually to Him for wisdom and strength. But what am I, that He should condescend to make me instrumental in communicating any good to others? I am humbled in the dust before him. It is the Lord, *the Lord himself*, that has done the work. The treasure is in an earthen vessel, but the excellency of the power is of God *only*, and not of man.”*

Early in the month of January, 1769, Lady Huntingdon arrived in London full of plans for the glory of God and the immortal happiness of her fellow-creatures. Her Ladyship's residence at this time was in Portland-row, Cavendish-square. Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley were both in the metropolis, and frequent in preaching at her Ladyship's house, with Mr. Romaine and others. On Tuesday the 10th of January, Mr. Whitefield administered the sacrament, and Mr. Wesley preached on “Ye are saved by faith.” Tuesday, the 17th, Mr. Romaine administered the Lord's Supper, and gave a solemn address to the communicants: after which Mr. Whitefield explained that important declaration, “If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

Lady Huntingdon appears to have suffered much from bodily

* Previous to the opening of the College at Trevecca, Mr. Shipman and Mr. Matthews, two of the students expelled from Oxford, paid her Ladyship a visit at Tunbridge Wells, with a view of obtaining admission into the intended College, and were most cordially received by her Ladyship. It occurred to Lady Huntingdon, that as she had two ministers in her house, one of them should preach. Notice was accordingly sent round that on such an evening there would be preaching before the door. At the appointed time, a great many people had collected together, which the young men seeing, inquired what it meant? Her Ladyship said, “As I have two preachers in my house, one of you must preach to the people.” In reply, they said they had never preached publicly, and wished to be excused. Mr. Shipman was a ready speaker, but Mr. Matthews was remarkably diffident. Lady Huntingdon, therefore, judged it best for Mr. Shipman to make the first attempt. While he hesitated, she put a Bible into his hand, insisting upon his appearing before the people, and either tell them he was afraid to trust to God, or to do the best he could. On the servants opening the door, her Ladyship thrust him out with her blessing, saying, “The Lord be with you—do the best you can.” He preached from Genesis vi. 3, “And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh.”

indisposition at this time. Her constitution, ever since her last illness, had been extremely delicate; and a cold, caught soon after she reached London, threw her on a bed of sickness. Her inward conflicts were severe, and the pressure of many outward things concurred to aggravate her affliction.

Mr. Whitefield was now almost entirely laid aside from duty. On the 27th of February, Mr. Wesley writes, "I had once more agreeable conversation with my old friend and fellow-labourer, George Whitefield. His soul appeared to be vigorous still; but his body was sinking apace; and unless God interpose with his mighty hand he must soon finish his labours." The next day, however, he was at Lady Huntingdon's, but wholly unable to take any active part in the usual service at her house. Mr. Green administered the Sacrament, assisted by Mr. Elliott, and Mr. Romaine preached on "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Early in the month of March Mr. Venn arrived in London, and was most cordially greeted by Lady Huntingdon, with whom he spent much of his time. Many pulpits were open to him, and frequent applications were made to him to preach charity sermons:—

"Last Sunday morning (says he) I preached a charity sermon in one of the largest churches in London. The curate so hated my name that he left the church, and there was no one to read the prayers; after making the congregation wait, I was obliged to read them myself. In the congregation I saw two young men from Huddersfield, who had run away from their homes. I took occasion to tell the congregation that I knew there were present two unhappy people, self-deceivers concerning the doctrine of grace."

At the request of Mr. Thornton, who was high-sheriff for the county of Surrey, Mr. Venn preached the assize sermon at Kingston, which was afterwards published; he preached also very frequently at Lady Huntingdon's, and at the Lock Chapel. On one occasion, after Mr. Whitefield had preached at her Ladyship's, Mr. Romaine and Mr. Venn administered the Sacrament; and in the evening of the same day Mr. Venn preached in her drawing-room to a very crowded assembly. Mr. Whitefield was now much recovered, and enabled to preach several days successively; and Mr. Venn availed himself of every opportunity to attend the instructive ministry of that great apostle of the Lord. At the last meeting at Lady Huntingdon's house for the season, her Ladyship being about to leave London, and Mr. Venn being on his return to Yorkshire, Mr. Charles Wesley exhorted all present to "stand fast in one mind and in one judgment." The Lord's Supper was administered by Mr. Romaine

and Mr. Venn, and Mr. Whitefield gave a very solemn parting prayer; Mr. Venn concluded with the usual benediction; after which the doxology—

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow,” &c.

was sung with uncommon fervour and devotion, and all separated with a deeper sense of their mercies, and of their infinite obligations to the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Previous to the day of dedication at Tunbridge, her Ladyship was very diligent in sending invitations about the neighbourhood, and also to some more distant, requesting their attendance on that occasion. Accordingly, great numbers of persons flocked into Tunbridge, and at a very early hour of the morning assembled in front of her residence, where they continued engaged in singing hymns, and other acts of devotion, till the time when public service commenced. Lady Huntingdon has been often heard to say, in reference to this circumstance—“It is impossible to express the delight and satisfaction I experienced on being awake at an early hour in the morning by the voice of praise and thanksgiving—my heart was powerfully affected, and never can I forget the sensations of pleasure I then felt.”

On Sunday, July 23, the chapel was opened for divine worship, and soon thronged in every part. Mr. De Courcy, who came down for the purpose, read the prayers of the Established Church, and Mr. Whitefield preached from Genesis xviii. 17: “How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!” The congregation was too large to be accommodated in the chapel, and this herald of salvation, like his great Master, preached in the open air, from a mount in the court before the chapel. The hallowed spot is still preserved, and when pointed out to the visitant can scarcely

* Lady Huntingdon had engaged Mr. Venn before his departure to visit a condemned criminal, at a short distance from London. He was the son of godly parents in Ireland, yet a most notorious offender, who had been recommended to her Ladyship’s notice by Mr. Shirley, a friend of his unhappy parents. Mr. Whitefield and several other ministers had been to see him, and hopes were entertained that he was under deep convictions as to his awful condition in the sight of God the Judge of all. “I am so much engaged (says Mr. Venn) in visiting a condemned man, twelve miles from town, that I fear I shall not be able to leave London before the end of three weeks. I think it long; but my friends are so kind, and make so much of my company, that I cannot refuse them. The man is chained to the floor whilst I am preaching to him.” And again, “I have returned from visiting the condemned prisoner, with whom I was a good deal; and preached one evening in the gaol to a small company, on those blessed words—*‘The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.’*” The poor man seemed to have a glimpse of that blessed Redeemer, and His ability and willingness to save him; so that his heart began to feel a hope he never knew before: so certain is it that the preaching of Christ crucified is the power of God unto salvation.

be regarded without the liveliest interest, and the most heart-stirring emotions. When contemplating the scene, imagination unveils this man of God, and we almost again behold him stretching out his hand, and exclaiming—"Look yonder! what is that I see! it is my agonizing Lord! hark! hark! do not you hear? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!"*

Mr. Whitefield's sermon at the opening of the chapel at Tunbridge Wells was said to have been a perfect piece of oratory. One who was present said, "How earnestly did he pray that some poor sinners might acknowledge that chapel as the place of their spiritual nativity!" His prayer was not in vain—it was recorded in the courts of heaven; and the 'last great day will unfold to an assembled world some of the effects resulting from the erection of that house of prayer. The late Mrs. Margaret Magdalene Althens has left on record that it was the place of her spiritual nativity.†

The evening of the day on which the chapel was opened by Mr. Whitefield, Mr. De Courcy preached from Rev. i. 18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death." The next day the Sacrament was administered by Mr. De Courcy, and Mr. Whitefield gave a most solemn and awful charge to the communicants. "Such a Sacrament (says Mrs.

* Mr. Whitefield's maxim was, "to preach, as Apelles painted, for ETERNITY." He was first struck with this maxim at the table of Archbishop Boulter in Ireland, when the great Dr. Delany said to him, "I wish whenever I go up into a pulpit, to look upon it as the last time I shall ever preach, or the last time the people may hear." He never forgot this. He often said—"Would ministers preach for eternity, they would then act the part of true Christian orators, and not only calmly and coolly inform the understanding, but by persuasive, pathetic address, endeavour to move the affections and warm the heart. To act otherwise bespeaks a *sad ignorance of human nature*, and such an inexcusable indolence and indifference in the preacher, as must *constrain* the hearers to suspect, whether they will or not, that the preacher, let him be who he will—*only deals in the false commerce of unfelt truth.*"

It must ever be borne in mind, that Mr. Whitefield's face was a language, his intonation music, and his action passion. So much was this the case, that Garrick said of him he could make men weep or tremble by his varied utterances of the word "Mesopotamia."

† Mrs. Althens, whose maiden name was Jasper, had a large share in the vicissitudes so common in human life. Her mother being a German, she was educated in that language, as well as in her native tongue. Being on a visit to her aunt, who resided in the neighbourhood of Tunbridge for the benefit of the air, she had an invitation from Lady Huntingdon to the opening of the chapel. Her aunt appears to have been a pious woman, for while she was conversing with her Ladyship on religious matters, Miss Jasper was forming determinations that nothing she might hear or see should make any impression upon her mind, and hardening herself against every thing that was serious. "But, oh!" says she, "the amazing love of God! when he saw me in my blood, he said unto me, Live!"

Althens) as I never was present at before; I had such a view of Jesus Christ crucified, that I seemed as caught up into the third heaven, to hear things unutterable."

In September, 1771, Lady Huntingdon received a sensible anonymous letter, requesting her to send a minister to Margate, in the Isle of Thanet, describing it as a licentious place, particularly at the watering season. She made known the contents of it to one of her senior students, Mr. William Aldridge, and gave him the liberty of choosing any student he pleased in the College to accompany and assist him in this important work. Mr. Aldridge fixed upon the Rev. Joseph Cook, who died, in 1799, a missionary in South Carolina: he cordially approved of the design, and was eminently zealous for God. Being utterly unknown to any person at Margate, they stood in the streets, and proclaimed the most important intelligence that ever reached the ear of mortal, that there is a Saviour, even Christ the Lord. Many attended, and the labours of these itinerants to revive a spirit of zeal and true Christianity, to make the name of Jesus more precious, and his authority more respected, were attended with the happiest effects. Meeting with such success, they extended the sphere of their labours, and preached not only at Margate, but at many other places in the Isle of Thanet.

The late Mrs. Horsley, a woman in humble life, was awakened at a very early age to a sense of her danger, through the ministry of Mr. Ingham, or one of his fellow-labourers, who visited her native village in the neighbourhood of Wakefield.*

At about the age of twenty-four she married her first husband,

* Having learned that there was to be preaching at a public house at Wakefield, kept by the father of one of Mr. Wesley's preachers, she determined, notwithstanding the opposition of her parents, to attend. The text was singular: "The people ate and drank, and rose up to play." It pleased the Lord, however, to bless the word, and impressions were made on her mind, which, through a life protracted far beyond the general allotment of mankind, were never lost. Her parents noticing the altered demeanour of their daughter, who laboured under strong convictions, treated her as insane, and threatened to send her to a mad-house, if again she attended the preaching of the Gospel. Their unkindness, and the temptations of Satan, had well nigh driven her to desperation. When at the age of twenty years, she was sent to the care of her uncle, Mr. Grace, at Dover; her parents vainly hoping the gaieties of new scenes and new acquaintances would remove those gloomy ideas from the mind of their daughter. It pleased God, however, that their design should be made instrumental in bringing her out of her state of depression in a way by them least wished or expected.

Soon after her arrival, that great moral renovation, which was wrought through the itinerant labours of Messrs. Wesleys and Whitefield, was extended to Dover. Mrs. Horsley made one of the first Wesleyan congregation held *under cover* in that town, which met in a cooper's shop, on the site of the present Quaker's meeting-house, and became one of the first fruits unto God of the pious labours of these servants of the Most High. Her attachment to divine

William Doughty, with whom she came to Dover. Mr. Doughty, who had imbibed the sentiments of the pious Baxter,* joined with three others, viz., Messrs. Boyce, Russell, and Spearpoint, in giving an invitation to Mr. Aldridge, and Mr. Cook. Mr. Aldridge began the public ministry of the Connexion in Dover. He was a man of fearless character, and, that greater excitement might be made in the public mind, chose to deliver his first address in the market-place, from a chair borrowed at a neighbouring barber's shop. The inhabitants were returning from afternoon worship at the parish church, which forthwith increased the out-door congregation to a mob that began to assail the preacher with every offensive missile they could procure. The desired effect having been produced, Mr. Aldridge cut short his discourse, and begged the attendance of his audience at the old meeting-house in the evening. That place, deserted by its congregation and deprived of its minister, had been shut up for a considerable time, but was procured by the persons who had given the invitation to Lady Huntingdon's ministers. There, in a tolerated and protected place of worship, with all his characteristic energy, Mr. Aldridge resumed his discourse, and not without success; for several who, a few hours before, were crying, "Away with such fellows," were now pricked to the heart—irresistible conviction seized on their consciences, and they cried out under the word—"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

It was now agreed on by all parties that Mr. Aldridge and Mr. Cook should supply Margate and Dover constantly, and change every week: accordingly Mr. Cook visited Dover, and preached on the next Tuesday evening in the Presbyterian meeting-house. His first text was Heb. ii. 3. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation!"

Many attended, and were much struck with the sight of such

ordinances, and to those who, like herself, had set their faces Zion-ward, awakened the opposition and anger of her uncle; who, after trying his authority to prevent her attendance on the means of grace, sent an account of what he considered her wilful misconduct to her relations in Yorkshire. The consequence was, that her mother took a journey from that distant part of the kingdom, for the purpose of adding her parental authority to the admonitions of her uncle. Mrs. Horsley was, however, enabled, through divine grace, to resist all their importunities, although her mother, on taking leave of her, entreated her with tears, not to bring the grey hairs of her father with sorrow to the grave.

After her mother's departure, her meek deportment and consistent walk so won upon the affections of her uncle, that he was induced to attend the preaching of the Gospel in her company. He also became the subject of a divine change, and many years after died in the faith of Christ.

* He had joined the Wesleyans, and occasionally attended the ministry of Mr. Richard Holt, a Presbyterian minister, who died in 1768.

a youth, who delivered his discourse extempore (which was a new thing to most of them). This sermon was peculiarly blessed to the Rev. William Atwood, who subsequently became an active village preacher, and eventually pastor of the Particular Baptist congregation in the adjacent town of Folkstone; so that he was obliged to say, "Here is a man that hath told me all things that ever I did; surely he is a servant of Christ." Mr. Cook continued to supply Dover, in his turn, for some time, and was remarkably useful in winning souls to Christ, all of whom have long since joined their Spiritual Father in the kingdom above.*

Such was the origin of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion at Dover and Margate, where spacious and elegant chapels have since been erected, and where numerous and respectable congregations assemble to hear all the words of this life. The labours of Mr. Aldridge and Mr. Cook were not confined to these places; at Folkstone their word was signally

* Having identified Mrs. Doughty, afterwards Mrs. Horsley, with the rise and prosperity of the two great divisions of the Methodist body in Dover, little remains to be said of her public life. Her husband died in the faith in 1795, and was buried in the yard of the old meeting-house, now called Zion Chapel. Her aim, however, was still the good of souls, and the honour of her divine Master. The savour of the Gospel was ever on her lips. Of her spiritual admonitions none partook more largely than young ministers: to them her advice was, living and dying—"Preach Christ! preach Christ!" Of the success of her monitory labours one instance may suffice:—About thirty years since, a highly respected and gifted young clergyman became minister of the parish in which Mrs. Horsley resided. She heard him preach, noticed his misconceptions, and, like another Priscilla, took him home, and expounded unto him (whilst he partook of her homely cup of tea) the way of God more perfectly. The Lord was pleased, by her means, to convey instruction to his servant, who, we believe, still lives, and is a faithful witness to the truth as it is in Jesus, over a parochial charge in the north of England.

The closing years of Mrs. Horsley's extended life were marked alike by the kindness of her Christian friends and her habitual, cheerful piety; and when infirmity at length prevented her from attending at the Pier Chapel with her Wesleyan friends, she became a steady worshipper at Zion Chapel, joining with those who are there united in Christian fellowship in all the ordinances of the Lord Jesus. Here she continued till the last year of her life, bearing her testimony to the truth; always at the close of the public services recommending the Saviour to the passers by, in her way to the door. Her last days were closed at the neighbouring village of River, where distance prevented her friends from witnessing her end, which was, emphatically, *peace*. Feeling the approach of death, she requested an alteration of her position; she then returned her thanks to the kind woman who had attended to her dying request, blessed God for his goodness, and, with the expression of praise upon her lips, closed her eyes, and, without a struggle, fell asleep in Christ Jesus, November 11, 1830, aged ninety-five years and six months. The funeral service was performed over her remains, in the burial-ground of Zion Chapel, by the Rev. Mr. Chote, Methodist preacher, assisted by the Rev. Thomas Anderson, minister of Lady Huntingdon's Chapel; and a sermon was preached by each of them on the occasion at their respective places of worship.

blessed to many, several of whom joined the Baptist interest, and one of them was a deacon of the church of which Mr. Atwood afterwards became pastor. The chapel was eventually purchased by the trustees of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, and opened in the year 1798, by the Rev. Thomas Drew: it was well filled with a respectable and attentive congregation, and there appeared at that time a great disposition for hearing among the inhabitants of the town.

Mr. Aldridge and Mr. Cook preached also occasionally at Deal, but met with much opposition, chiefly from Dr. Nicholas Carter, who had been many years perpetual curate of St. George's Chapel. After many ineffectual attempts on his part to prevent their preaching, and to create a disturbance when the people were willing to hear them, he addressed an impertinent letter to Lady Huntingdon, which he desired Mr. Aldridge to deliver, without fail, to *old Mother Huntingdon*.

"Madam,—I am surprised at your intruding yourself upon me and my parishioners. A woman of your rank and education I should have thought would have known better than to be guilty of any such rudeness. Pray who gave you leave to send your *preaching-fellows* into my parish? I desire you will command them to withdraw from Deal forthwith, or I shall take steps to compel them to make a hasty retreat. They have done plenty of mischief, I understand, at Dover, and other places by such preachments, and the introduction of new doctrines, disturbing people's minds, and causing divisions and dissensions. I had enough of this sort of business after your favourite Whitefield preached here many years ago, and I will not suffer a repetition of the same, though these impudent Wesleys and their followers have often annoyed me, hoping to establish themselves here also. I desire, Madam, that you will *immediately* withdraw your preachers from this place, and give me no more cause of complaint.

"Yours, &c.

N. CARTER,

"Perpetual Curate of St. George's Chapel, Deal."

The Rev. Montague Cunningham, the nephew of the learned and celebrated Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, in his memoirs of that lady, observes:—

"The occasion of Dr. Carter's publishing his volume of sermons was an impertinent as well as false insinuation of Whitefield, that the inhabitants of Deal had need of his assistance, as their minister did not preach to them the Gospel of Christ. Dr. Carter, therefore, printed a few sermons, not composed for the press, but of those which he was in the habit of preaching in the chapel of that town."

Soon after the Doctor had published his sermons, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter sent a present of a copy to her friend, the Countess of Hertford, who in reply said:—

"I am ashamed that I have not sooner returned you my thanks for

your present of Dr. Carter's sermons, which are such as afford a clear demonstration that there was no reason for Mr. Whitefield to be followed with so much joy at Deal, as he intimated in the first part of his journal."*

It is worthy of remark how materially the sentiments of this celebrated woman were changed in after-life, when she became the friend and correspondent of Lady Huntingdon and the admirer of Mr. Whitefield.

Mr. Aldridge and Mr. Cook next visited Canterbury,^a and, having no acquaintance in the town, preached in the streets. Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley had frequently visited that city, and many fruits of their labours remained. Some of these were collected together, and occasionally visited by the students from Trevecca, and by the ministers supplying Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Tunbridge Wells. Much about the same period Charles and Edward Perronet, sons of the venerable vicar of Shoreham, came to reside in Canterbury.[†]

Mr. Edward Perronet seconded the views of Mr. Aldridge,

* Many years after the above occurrence Lady Huntingdon was introduced to Mrs. Elizabeth Carter and Miss Catherine Talbot, niece to the Lord Chancellor Talbot, a young lady of considerable genius and most amiable disposition. This was brought about by a mutual friend, the celebrated William Pulteney, Earl of Bath, who delighted in the society of Lady Huntingdon, and regarded her intellectual powers and acquisitions with unfeigned admiration. But it does not appear that any particular intimacy succeeded this introduction—there being very little similarity of feelings or principles existing between them. Once, in company with the Bishop of Gloucester, in the course of conversation, Lady Huntingdon made some allusion to the extraordinary success attending the labours of Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley, and the revival of light and truth which their laborious ministry was likely to produce. This called forth some severe observations from Mrs. Elizabeth Carter on the preaching of Mr. Whitefield at Deal, where her father resided, and an explanation of the circumstances which led to the publication of his sermons. "Madam," replied Lady Huntingdon, "every thing depends on the right interpretation of the term *gospel*. In my humble opinion it signifies *good news—glad tidings of great joy—a gracious declaration of mercy to the guilty and the ruined—salvation from the wrath to come—salvation from the guilt and power of sin, through the meritorious righteousness and blood-shedding of the Lord of life and glory*. But of this interpretation I can find no trace in the sermons of Dr. Carter; and I am well aware that, in the present day, many who call themselves Christians substitute a system of heathen ethics, varnished over with the name of Christian morality, for the vicarious sacrifice offered on the cross as the sure foundation of a sinner's hope. *This, and only this*, will avail you or me, my dear Madam, in the great and terrible day of the Lord, when summoned to appear at his tribunal. This was sufficient to silence Mrs. Carter, who, though a lady of profound learning and genius, was no theologian, and never after wished to encounter Lady Huntingdon.

† They had been itinerant preachers in Mr. Wesley's Connexion for a short time. The former desisted for want of health, and the latter from some change in his opinions. Charles Perronet died at Canterbury in 1776, but his brother survived him many years, and possessed equal powers with him, to which was superadded a large fund of wit. But wit is a dangerous thing to those who do not live under the sacred and benevolent influence of the Spirit of God.

and the different preachers sent by Lady Huntingdon to Canterbury; and, after a little time, commenced preaching under her Ladyship's patronage. The Lord owned his labours of love at Canterbury, Norwich, and other places to which he was sent by the Countess, with considerable success. In almost every place where he proclaimed the love of Jesus, the Lord graciously gave him seals to his ministry. Though the son of a clergyman, he is said to have been a notorious enemy to the hierarchy of the Church of England, and sometimes employed his pen in satirizing it.*

After he ceased to be employed by Lady Huntingdon, who had frequently remonstrated with him on his openly avowed enmity to the Church Establishment, he preached to a small congregation of Dissenters, till his death, which took place about the year 1791.

The congregation having very considerably increased, a beautiful chapel was erected under the auspices of Lady Anne Erskine, and opened on the 26th of November, 1797: when the Rev. Dr. Haweis and the Rev. Mr. Caldwell preached. The number obliged to depart for want of room was greater than that of those who, by early attendance, were fortunate enough to secure admission. The Rev. Mr. Young was for several years the officiating minister of this chapel, having been appointed to that office by Lady Anne Erskine. Some years since, Ashford, a respectable market-town, containing a population of about two thousand souls, attracted the attention of several of the members of her Ladyship's chapel at Canterbury; and, from its nearness to that city, being distant only twelve miles, they considered it an eligible station for the Connexion. A chapel which had been recently built there, fifty-three feet by twenty-three, was purchased by the Trustees of the Connexion, and opened on Sunday, the 10th of October, 1823, by the Rev. James Bloomfield. This place of worship is capable of holding between four and five hundred persons, and is most respectably attended.

Maidstone, Greenhithe, Dartford, Lewisham, and other places in Kent, were also visited about this time by Mr. Aldridge and other ministers under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon: in all which places chapels have since been erected in the Independent interest. Of Mr. Cook we will speak in another place. As a preacher, Mr. Aldridge was very popular. He delivered his

* He was the author of an anonymous poem, called "*The Mitre*," which is generally supposed to have been one of the keenest satires on the national establishment that was ever written. It was printed, but the publication of it was suppressed; it is said by the influence, and at the request of Mr. Wesley.

discourses with perspicuity and ardour; his ideas were generally arranged with propriety, and his subjects mostly selected with judgment. His ministerial labours, especially in the early part of his life, were very successful; and he had the singular felicity of introducing into the ministry no less than sixteen or seventeen young men from his own communion. He was a native of Wiltshire; and at the age of twenty-four received some serious impressions, which issued in a saving change of his mind and conduct. Having a strong inclination to the Christian ministry, he was introduced to Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca, and became one of her senior students. Having continued there during the time usually allotted to study, he began to preach in her Ladyship's Connexion, in which he laboured for several years, and which afforded him an opportunity of visiting various parts of England.

About the period that he was at Dover, desirous of obtaining episcopal ordination, he applied to his noble patroness to procure him orders. With the assistance of Mr. Fletcher, a title was procured, and he was to have been ordained at the same time with his fellow-student, Mr. Glazebrook, vicar of Belper, and minister of St. James's, Warrington.

The cause of Mr. Aldridge's failing to obtain episcopal ordination at this time is thus briefly stated by her Ladyship, in a letter to Mr. Hawkesworth, then serving her chapel in Dublin, and who had been one of his fellow-students:—"Glazebrook was accepted for ordination; and Aldridge also, but for the ill-humour of Mr. Morgan to Aldridge, who will not read in the church his intentions for orders."

Lady Huntingdon, who seldom permitted her students to continue long in one place, afterwards appointed Mr. Aldridge to supply the Mulberry-gardens Chapel, in London. There his ministry was so well received by the congregation, that they united in a petition to the Countess to have his labours continued for some time longer; but her Ladyship peremptorily refused, and he quitted her Connexion in 1776. Jewry-street Chapel being then vacant, Mr. Aldridge was invited to settle there as the stated officiating minister. In this connexion he continued upwards of twenty-one years, and was greatly beloved by an affectionate congregation.

During the early part of Mr. Aldridge's ministry at Jewry-street Chapel, he had the assistance of the Rev. Mr. Bryan.*

On Friday morning, February 28th, 1797, in the 60th year

* This gentleman was a native of Yorkshire, and pursued his studies at Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca. But he did not itinerate long in that Connexion. Erasmus, a Greek bishop, having visited London, in 1768, ordained

of his age, he bade adieu to the painful scene of this wilderness, and entered into the joy of his Lord. The Rev. George Gould delivered the address at his interment in Bunhill-fields; and on the following Lord's-day two funeral sermons were preached for him at Jewry-street Chapel, by two of his fellow students at Trevecca: that in the morning, by the Rev. Anthony Crole, minister of Founders' Hall; and in the evening, by the Rev. Thomas Bryan, of New Road, St. George's in the East. The three services were afterwards printed. Mr. Aldridge published "The Doctrine of the Trinity, stated, proved, and defended;" and a funeral sermon on the death of Lady Huntingdon.

During his last illness, Mr. Aldridge had the occasional assistance of the Rev. Richard Povah, who was educated at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

Dr. Povah was ordained by Dr. Markham, Archbishop of York, upon a title to a living in Yorkshire. He afterwards became curate and evening lecturer of St. James's, Duke's-place, where he established an excellent school of instruction and industry. About the year 1806 he became afternoon lecturer of St. Paul's, Shadwell; and in the year 1811 he was chosen, by a considerable proportion of votes, Friday morning lecturer at St. Bartholomew by the Royal Exchange, but was prevented from fulfilling the intentions of the electors, as is well known, from the circumstance of the then Bishop of London (Dr. Randolph) having refused to sanction their choice, on the score of Dr. Povah's unfitness for the office. This long depending cause was decided in the Court of King's Bench, February 8th, 1812. Lord Ellenborough delivered the judgment of the court, which was to this effect:—

"That the Bishop had a right to determine upon the fitness of the minister to occupy the station proposed; it was concluded that the Bishop *conscientiously* objected to Dr. Povah as unfit; and that the court could not interfere with the Bishop's conscience. The affidavit of two reverend gentlemen, who objected to Dr. Povah, contained in the Bishop's affidavit, were considered as far more *credible* and *respectable* than the evidence adduced by himself and his friends, in refutation of the objections made against him on account of his doctrines. The court decided that they could not overturn the Bishop's refusal, and violate a Bishop's conscience. The rule was therefore discharged."*

him some years before he was under Lady Huntingdon's patronage. After he left her Ladyship's Connexion he became minister of a congregation at Sheffield. Having contracted an acquaintance with Mr. Aldridge while at college, it was afterwards maintained by a mutual correspondence; and when Mr. Aldridge settled at Jewry-street, Mr. Bryan constantly spent three months of the year in London.

* The chapel in Jewry-street is of ancient date, and was occupied by a

But to return to the chapel at Tunbridge Wells. It would appear Lady Huntingdon was desirous of obtaining a resident minister for this place of worship,—a useful and popular clergyman—one who would superintend the work in Kent, and visit from time to time the different stations occupied by the students. With this view she applied to the Rev. Abraham Maddock, who had laboured faithfully at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, during a period of nine years, but from which he was ignominiously driven, without a charge against him that could justify the treatment he met with, but the crime of having collected large congregations, and being blessed to the call and conversion of a vast number of persons, both in the town and in the country round about him. He was originally bred to the law, and continued in the profession of an attorney till the year 1757, when he was ordained deacon by Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Lincoln, at Bugden. He received priest's orders on the 23rd of September 1759, from Dr. Terrick, then Bishop of Peterborough. Mr. Whitefield mentions Mr. Maddock in a letter to Dr. Gillies. "Seven Gospel ministers," says he, "were together at Bristol when the counsellor preached. A *lawyer* hath lately entered likewise into orders, and I humbly hope the blessed Jesus will not give us up." The letter is dated, "October 16th, 1757." Mr. Madan was the *counsellor*, and had been ordained a short time before Mr. Maddock.

Mr. Maddock had been recommended by Lady Huntingdon to the late memorable Mr. Hervey, as his curate at Weston-Flavel; he continued with him till his death, and was promised by the patron to succeed him in one of his livings, but which, to say no more, was never fulfilled. His next ministrations were at Weldon, where he continued only a few months; the Gospel being too offensive there. In September, 1773, he removed to Guilsborough, and entered upon the curacy of Creaton, a neighbouring village, which was the last stage of his ministry.

society of Presbyterians for upwards of a century, under the ministry of Dr. Lardner and Dr. Benson. The church was in a very low state; for though they were men of learning and talents, and laboured diligently, according to those principles which they deemed correct, happily their cold and destructive Socinian errors rendered their mode of preaching extremely unpopular; and the withering blast of this pernicious system was but ill adapted to preserve the church from a languishing state. It has the appearance of an ancient building, and does not seem materially altered from its former state. When it was opened upon the present plan, an organ was erected in the front gallery, and the Liturgy of the Church of England introduced. Lady Huntingdon sometimes attended there, and in one of her letters mention is made of the profit and pleasure with which she heard Mr. Aldridge and other ministers of Christ, in that place. The ministers supplying her Ladyship's chapel at Mulberry-gardens frequently assisted Mr. Aldridge, and a friendly intercourse was maintained between the managers of both places.

Here he laboured in season and out of season, with all zeal and diligence, for *twenty pounds a year!*

Before he quitted Kettering, during his illness, which was caused by the furious malice of his enemies, Mr. Newton paid him a visit, and took occasion, from his sickness, to preach amongst his parishioners, from John xii. 35: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." One of his stated hearers, belonging to the parish of Lavenden, to whom his ministry had been useful, was then dead, and the father of the young woman applied to the rector for liberty for Mr. Newton to preach her funeral sermon, which he refused, and would preach one himself, though undesired, and, indeed, though desired not; but as he thought the family, and some others who heard Mr. Maddock and Mr. Newton, would be there, he seized the occasion to rail much against enthusiasm, methodism, &c. He chose Romans viii. 16, for his text, though it little suited his purpose; for he aimed to prove that none could have their sins forgiven in this life, and that it was presumption to expect it. The following Lord's-day, in the afternoon, Mr. Newton borrowed his text—"The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," and endeavoured to show (though without using names) the falsity of his assertions. Mr. Newton afterwards preached a funeral sermon for Miss Perry, from Job xxxiii, 24, "which passage, (says he,) I hope and believe was remarkably verified in her case."

Many years ago, the late venerable rector of St. Mary Woolnoth was walking in the highway that leads to the parish church of Creaton, where he was to preach on a certain occasion; struck with the extreme beauty of the scenery which surrounded him on every side, and not insensible to the peculiar blessing which had long attended the means of grace in that place and neighbourhood, he lifted up his eyes and hands, saying, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! my soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God!" Psalm lxxxiv. 1 and 2. The natural and spiritual scenery connected with the spot afforded him a happy subject for the pulpit, and he was then immediately led to preach from that very text. Those who were present long remembered in how striking and judicious a way he expatiated on the words of the Psalmist, and how singularly appropriate his discourse was to the place and the congregation then assembled.*

Mr. Maddock quitted this vale of tears on Sunday morning,

* Mr. Newton was not the only one who could bear a willing and grateful testimony to the goodness of God as it concerns the village and vicinity of

July 17th, 1785, in the 72nd year of his age, and was buried in the churchyard of Creaton, by his own desire, on the 21st of July following, when a sermon was preached to a very large and much affected congregation, by the Rev. Thomas Scott, of Olney, afterwards rector of Aston-Sandford, from Acts xiii. 36. When informed of the death of her old and long-trying friend, by letter from Mr. Scott, Lady Huntingdon shed tears; and when speaking of him afterwards she said—

“ He has entered the haven of rest before me. My time will soon come. Blessed be God, I have a saving knowledge of my interest in Him, and am continually receiving fresh grace and strength from that fulness which is treasured up in the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh! how often have I by faith ascended to the top of Pisgah, and viewed the promised land—

—— the Canaan which I love
With unobscured eyes.

The various dispensations of Providence have reminded me frequently during my long life that the world is not my rest. As a stranger and a pilgrim, I look forward to the termination of my long journey with satisfaction—for then I shall see my Saviour as he is, and meet all my dear old friends and companions, with whom I have so often taken sweet counsel on earth. Through all the remaining moments of my life, I desire this one thing only—that I may be kept steadily, as a redeemed sinner saved by grace, looking unto Jesus!”

It was during this interval that Lady Huntingdon was visited by an amiable and exemplary young clergyman, the Rev. William Cawthorne Unwin, rector of Stock, near Ramsden, in Essex, to which living he had been instituted in July 1769. Mr. Berridge had known him whilst a student of Christ College, Cambridge, and had frequently mentioned him to her Ladyship in terms of high approbation. He remained a few weeks at Tunbridge Wells, and his ministry was generally acceptable to the people. He also preached a few times in Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bristol, and occasionally in other places, but did not

Creaton. Adorned, as it is, with a thousand beauties of natural prospect, this is its least praise. It has long been favoured with the blessing of a faithful evangelical ministry. Under the labours of Mr. Maddock, and his worthy successor, the Rev. Thomas Jones, many souls have been there born to God, and very extensive benefits conferred on the neighbourhood at large. At this place, also, for a long series of years, several clergymen, who have the best interests of the Church of England at heart, have been annually accustomed to meet and to “take sweet counsel together,” and converse upon those subjects which have a direct and happy tendency to excite them to holy activity in their ministry, and the most conscientious consistency to their principles and conduct, as ministers of the Established Church. Much usefulness has arisen from these clerical meetings, and some important literary projects, from which the public are now deriving considerable spiritual advantage, first originated in these conferences.

afford her Ladyship that frequent assistance which some others did. As a preacher, he pretended not to first-rate talents; but he was faithful in the discharge of his duty, and laboured to "maintain a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man." And as a "teacher in Israel," he failed not on all occasions to recommend, by precept and by practice, the superlative excellence of the religion of Christ.

This "amiable and exemplary minister of Christ," as Lady Huntingdon usually styled him, was the only son of the Rev. Morley Unwin, who superintended a private classical seminary at Huntingdon. Just at this period the celebrated author of "The Task" sought retirement and concealment there, where he might often have the company of his brother alone, without being known to the numerous academical friends amidst whom he resided at Cambridge; but he could not anywhere long remain unnoticed. Mr. Cowper's appearance was striking and interesting: a most intelligent and engaging countenance, a well-proportioned figure, and elegant manners, speedily drew attention from the inhabitants of a rural borough town. Young Mr. Unwin happening to be at Huntingdon at the period when Mr. Cowper came to reside there, conceived a strong desire for the acquaintance of the interesting stranger, and being himself possessed of very engaging manners, surmounted Mr. Cowper's reserve, and gradually acquired his confidential friendship. Such was the origin of the introduction of Cowper to the family of Mr. Unwin, consisting of himself, his wife, the son already named, and a daughter; an event which, when viewed in connection with his remaining years, will scarcely yield in importance to any feature of his life. Concerning these engaging persons, whose general habits of life, and especially whose piety, rendered them the very associates that Cowper wanted, he thus expresses himself in a letter written two months after to one of his earliest and warmest friends: "Now I know them, I wonder that I liked Huntingdon so well before I knew them, and am apt to think I should find every place disagreeable that had not an Unwin belonging to it."

The house which Mr. Unwin inhabited was a large and convenient dwelling in the High-street, in which he had been in the habit of receiving a few domestic pupils to prepare them for the University. At the division of the October Term, one of these students being called to Cambridge, it was proposed that the solitary lodging which Cowper occupied should be exchanged for the possession of the vacant place. Toward the close of the year 1765 he took up his residence entirely with this agreeable family. Mrs. Unwin had always been very fond of reading, and

was esteemed for superior intelligence; but she had been remarkable also for gaiety and vivacity. She soon, notwithstanding, fully entered into Mr. Cowper's religious views, and discovered a change of character that was far from being agreeable to her fashionable acquaintances. Her age exceeded Mr. Cowper's but seven years: yet, as she was married very young, and was the mother of his academical friend, he naturally regarded her with a kind of filial as well as with a spiritual affection. He thus writes of her to his cousin, Mrs. Major Cowper, sister to the Rev. Martin Madan:—

“The lady in whose house I live is so excellent a person, and regards me with a friendship so truly Christian, that I could almost fancy my own mother restored to live again, to compensate me for all my friends I have lost and all my connexions broken.”

Whilst in this retirement it pleased the Almighty to make Mr. Cowper instrumental to the conversion of almost all Mr. Unwin's family. The consequent alteration of their conduct excited the surprise and displeasure of their former intimates, whose round of amusements had long been undisturbed by appearances of genuine godliness. They regretted that a man of Mr. Cowper's accomplishments should have been spoiled for society by religion; and still more, that his delusion should have infected a family so extensively connected as Mr. Unwin's with the polite inhabitants. That connexion was soon dissolved; and their resentment of the change vented itself in a calumny, to which a gross ignorance of the principles of Christian friendship afforded the sole support.

A solemn and unexpected event removed Mr. Cowper to a vicinity more congenial with his feelings, and more conducive to his religious advantage. In the summer of 1767 the Rev. Morley Unwin was killed by a fall from his horse. At that juncture Mr. Newton, then curate of Olney, was on a visit to Dr. Conyers, at Helmsley, in Yorkshire, who had learned from young Mr. Unwin, about six months before, the change that had been wrought in his mother's mind, and at his desire took Cambridge in his way homewards, and called upon Mrs. Unwin. Mr. Newton found the family in the depth of affliction for their recent and sudden loss; and as they proposed shortly to remove from Huntingdon, he invited them to fix their abode at Olney. They repaired in the following October to a house so near the vicarage in which he lived, that by opening a door-way in a garden wall they could exchange mutual visits without entering the public street. Mrs. Unwin kept the house, and Mr. Cowper continued to board with her, as he had done in her husband's

life-time. Their days were spent nearly as at Huntingdon, except the differences produced by a substitution of frequent evangelical worship for the daily forms of prayer, the advantages of a more extended religious intercourse, and the peculiar friendship of Mr. Newton.

One of the benefits which resulted to Mr. Unwin by the removal of Mrs. Unwin and the poet to Olney was his acquaintance and intimacy with the Rev. Matthew Powley. This gentleman had graduated at Oxford, and was ordained about the same time as Mr. Newton, in 1764, and settled within a mile of Dr. Haweis's, in Northamptonshire. He was extremely intimate with Mr. Newton, and frequently supplied his church during his absence. "I trust (says Mr. Newton) I have provided well for Olney in my absence by Mr. Powley: he is a very valuable young man; he loves the people, and they him. May the Lord bless them together." Mr. Powley's occasional visits to Olney brought him acquainted with the Unwins, and he soon learned to indulge an attachment for Miss Unwin, a young lady of distinguished excellence and piety, which ended in their union. This amiable woman survived her excellent husband, and all those interesting characters with whom she was so intimately associated in early life, and closed her lengthened career in Yorkshire, near the scene of her partner's labours, in the month of November, 1835, having attained the advanced age of *eighty-nine*.

Whilst Mr. Unwin was at Tunbridge Wells with Lady Huntingdon, he recommended to her notice the Rev. David Simpson, as a person suitable to the charge of her Ladyship's chapel; and offered to be the bearer of any proposals which she might make to that effect.*

Unfortunately the offer came too late, for only a few days

* He was of St. John's College, Cambridge, and had for his associates at the University, Rowland Hill, Mr. Pentycross, Mr. De Coetlogan, and some others, who afterwards filled important situations in the church of Christ. He was ordained on the title of Mr. Unwin, to the curacy of Ramsden, in Essex, and remained in that situation for two years. Mr. Unwin, who had been his senior fellow-student at the University, greatly contributed to promote his happiness. He had from the commencement of Mr. Simpson's religious impressions, become both friend and counsellor, and in his new relation retained inviolate his former esteem and affection. As his first attempt to labour in the vineyard met with general approbation, so his unexpected removal created no considerable degree of astonishment. It was completely an act of his own, for which Mr. Simpson confessed he could give no satisfactory account. But many of those actions which appear to us to be under no controul of reason, are influenced by an unseen cause. "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not," is the declaration of God; and how many among the living

"——Through the palpable obscure
Find out their uncouth way!"

previous Mr. Simpson had accepted the invitation of Charles Roe, Esq., to his residence in Macclesfield, with a view to his officiating as the curate of the old, at that time the only church in the town. This disappointment* was communicated by Mr. Unwin to her Ladyship, who much regretted this engagement of his friend, as she appears to have anticipated much utility to the cause of God by his becoming minister of the chapel at Tunbridge Wells, and superintendent of the work throughout the county of Kent.

Mr. Simpson had not been long in his curacy before he had to pass the fiery ordeal. That a minister of his erudition, exact morality, and amenity of manners, should meet with, first in Bucks, and afterwards in Macclesfield, such undeserved indignities, can only be explained by causes which imply the degeneracy of our nature. It cannot be imagined that a man so intrepid could slumber at his post. In and out of the pulpit he attacked sin in its most heinous forms, or more imposing delusion. He explained, he enforced, the doctrines of pardon through faith in the blood of the covenant, and the fruits and witness of the Spirit: the result of his indefatigable toil still remains in many living examples. For a time those whom ignorance or vice had made his enemies, firm and determined, calculated upon final victory by the strong hand of ecclesiastical power: they addressed his diocesan. In consequence of the mutual apprehension of danger by the bishop and petitioners, from the encroachments of Methodism, he was for a season silenced. Thus he was twice suspended for teaching, according to a creed to which he was sworn and had subscribed, when deviation would have been a flagrant violation of the most sacred oaths. How long this suspension continued we are not informed; but in the interval he was not idle. Denied the liberty of publishing the Gospel in pulpits to which he was professionally devoted, he preached in the adjacent towns and

* The premature decease of Mr. Unwin, in November, 1786, embittered much of the comforts which his interesting friend enjoyed in the delightful society of his mother, the Newtons, and his cousin, Lady Hesketh. The ardour of his attachment to the author of "The Task," excited in him reciprocal friendship—a friendship which had subsisted and increased from their first interview at Huntingdon. To this event he alludes in concluding a letter to Lady Hesketh—"So farewell, my friend Unwin! The first man for whom I conceived a friendship after my removal from St. Alban's, and for whom I cannot but still feel a friendship, though I shall see thee with these eyes no more." Of Mrs. Unwin it will be unnecessary to say much. Her memory is embalmed in the melancholy history of Cowper. She breathed her last at East Dereham, in Norfolk, in December, 1796. Her funeral was attended by Mr. and Mrs. Powley, who had been summoned from Yorkshire within the few last days of their parent's life, but had not arrived till she had ceased to breathe. She was buried on the 23rd of December, in the north aisle of the church of East Dereham.

villages wherever a door was opened. This practice was not omitted after the storm of difficulties subsided, until infirmities and the general reception of the Methodist preachers, led him to conclude that his exertions were less necessary.

At this period Lady Huntingdon again pressed upon him the offer which had been made through Mr. Unwin, but it was again refused.

About this juncture the prime curacy of the Church at Macclesfield became vacant. The nomination is appended to the office of mayor, *pro tempore*. Mr. Gould, a friend of Mr. Simpson's, was the chief magistrate : he offered it to him, and it was accepted. To prevent his introduction, a petition, with seventeen articles of accusation, was transmitted to the Bishop of Chester. In this presentment, the learned prelate, differing in candour and impartiality from his predecessor, could only discover *one charge*—that he was a Methodist, and that his preaching promoted the spread of Methodism. With his usual heroism, alluding to the alleged offence, he says, in a letter to his Lordship :—

“ This is true. My method is to preach the great truths, and doctrines, and precepts of the Gospel, in as plain, and earnest, and affectionate a manner as I am able. Persons of different ranks, persuasions, and characters, come to hear. Some hereby have been convinced of the error of their ways, see their guilt, and the danger they are in, and become seriously concerned about their salvation. The change is soon discovered, they meet with one or another who invite them to attend the preaching and meetings among the Methodists, and hence their number is increased to a considerable degree. This is the truth. I own the fact. I have often thought of it; but I confess myself unequal to the difficulty. What would your Lordship advise ?”

Before this conflict came to an issue, his patron, Charles Roe, Esq., offered to erect him a church at his *own* expense. To this he was induced, in consequence of a resolution he had made that if he should succeed in business he would build a church in token of his gratitude to God. He accepted the offer. A proposal was made to his opponents, stating that he would relinquish the prime curacy of the old church, to which he had been presented, provided he could secure the consecration of the new church, and be regularly inducted as incumbent.

This project was the basis of future harmony. The new church, an elegant and beautiful structure, was erected in 1775, and afterwards consecrated. Upon Mr. Simpson's admission he resigned his curacy, and was, to the close of life, a period of twenty-six years, permitted to continue his ministrations without interruption. Thus ended a succession of opposition, almost

unexampled in modern history ; and this man of God lived to see, in the revolution of a few years, several of his most acrimonious adversaries in the ranks of his firmest supporters, and among those who received the greatest benefit from his public instructions.

Repeated disappointments seem to have caused Lady Huntingdon to abandon the scheme of a settled minister for Tunbridge Wells ; and for a period of ten years we find no allusion to the subject in her Ladyship's letters, or those of her numerous correspondents. The subject was again revived at the period when Mr. Sellon made such opposition to the opening of Spaffields Chapel, when her Ladyship was compelled, by the decision of the Spiritual Court, either to close the chapels she had been the means of erecting, or place them under the Toleration Act. In the summer of 1782 the Rev. William Taylor was engaged at Tunbridge Wells, when Lady Huntingdon wrote to him on the subject of the intended secession and the settlement of her chapel there. Her Ladyship's letter will best explain her views on this subject :—

“ College, July 19, 1782.

“ I hinted to you how inaccessible distance makes minds not sufficiently informed of even their own advantages, and therefore proposed meeting you at Bath, as the most reasonable and proper measure for obtaining the most united love and harmony ; and with which, from the kind influence there afforded me, might be best secured. Something has occurred to render this most desirable to me, and to lay it before you and the Lord, with many prayers, as the best previous means for your satisfaction—that for the present, the lease of Tunbridge Wells being renewed (and for a longer term than twenty-one years)—might not my *fully* giving you *all* up there, as it now stands, to be a foundation for every or any future contingency, and best to secure the possible prosperity of the Gospel in Kent, and to the poor great also ? Here no committee, but your most absolute power and liberty might be enjoyed ; and you and dear Mr. Wills, who so affectionately loves you, as does my dear niece ; and thus so mutually assist in the important stand we are making in London, and be a leading object to the most blessed and successful influence in spreading the glorious Gospel. You are both ministers of Jesus Christ—scholars—independent, in a good degree ; that must set you both above the low, and mean, and deceitful workers the miserable, poor, and distressed Church has among them. The ministry of you both universally honoured, and we must suppose must be doubly so from a point of such eminence as this calls you to in the Lord's vineyard. If it is what you don't approve, forgive these faithful and simple sentiments of my heart ; and may our Lord, who sees my heart, either incline your heart, or cause you to reject it, that He may be the sole mover for us both, to bring only His glory most effectually about, which ever way he appoints it. Should you approve it, the sooner it was done the better, as an ordination *must* be soon, or

the Dissenters will have all our congregations, and our students also, and the various revolutions of the ministers settled.

“ A bond might speedily secure to you my engagements, obliging me to execute, as soon as can be obtained, my deed of gift to you, containing my fullest authority for your present and future possession ; and for the present your winter months either at Bath or London, as your calls might render you subject to ; and you to have a right from the College for a student, or an ordained seceding minister, to supply your absence ; and to oblige the people to continue such in case of your call upon any occasion from Tunbridge Wells. Let this remain with you and me till your answer fully is given. The congregations are to allow, as now, two guineas a-week and travelling charges. The more I see this matter the more I am satisfied that it is the best means to secure in future your wishes : but the Lord alone for ever instructs us what is best. Should you or should you not approve this, to ourselves will be best kept, but should you, Fisher might make the bond of obligations, and remit it for my execution, till he shall prepare the deed in the fullest and most legal manner.

“ This is and must be your surest and safest road to Bath ; as only universal concurrence so obtained can give that lasting love and peace which must abide with all. Should this be the case, we shall see the wisdom and love of the Lord in making the chapel quite ready for you. Farewell, my ever affectionate friend,

“ S. HUNTINGDON.”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Lady Huntingdon's Connexion in Ireland—Mr. Whitefield the first who visited Ireland—Dr. Delany—Bishop of Limerick—Mr. Thomas Williams—Persecution of the Methodists—Mr. Charles Wesley—Speaker of the House of Commons—Dr. Gifford—Mr. Whitefield—Mr. Lunell—Mr. Whitefield's second visit to Ireland—Methodist Society—Mr. John Edwards—Mr. Whitefield's third visit to Ireland—near being murdered—United Brethren—Mr. Piers—Mr. Shirley—Mr. Wesley visits Ireland—Mr. Charles Wesley ceases to itinerate—Success of Mr. Shirley and Mr. Piers—Lord and Lady Clanricarde—Mr. De Courcy—Letter to Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Townsend—Mr. Venn—Mr. Newton—His first attempts at preaching—Irregulars and Itinerants.

“ Poor wicked Ireland, I trust, shall yet have a Gospel day. I can't see how or when—but it must be ; and till I find that opportunity, my eye is only waiting darkly for its accomplishment.”—*Lady Huntingdon.*

As the venerable Countess was instrumental in establishing a very flourishing congregation in Dublin, and laying the foundation of others in more distant parts of Ireland ; and as many of

those eminent clergymen who laboured with her in the blessed work of spreading the everlasting Gospel, with several of the students educated at her Ladyship's College in Wales, were the means, under God, of diffusing much of the light of evangelical truth through the kingdom in general, an account of the rise and progress of her benevolent and zealous exertions to spread the knowledge of the doctrine of her crucified Lord in that country, demands particular notice in the Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon. Since her Ladyship's death, the number of ministers in the Church of England, labouring in the strict pale of regularity, and contending for the true doctrine of the Articles in their literal and grammatical sense, has amazingly increased. The happy impulse given by the labours of her Ladyship's chaplains and ministers has left the most abundant tendency to accelerate the movement. Hundreds are now labouring in the like cause and with the like zeal—with true purpose of heart and signal blessings on their endeavours. May they be finally crowned with abundant success, till every city, every town, and every obscure village in the kingdom have the standard of the cross erected in each of them.

Ireland, unhappily sunk in darkness and the superstitions of Popery, and but little adorned with real evangelical knowledge, even in those who had assumed the name of Protestants, had long afforded matter of much sorrow to such as looked for the life and power of religion. Vital godliness had sunk to a very low standard; and only here and there an individual cleaved to the faith once delivered to the saints, and dared to be singular. The conduct of the clergy was indeed such as, with few exceptions, to merit the severest reprobation. Not one perhaps in a county was an active parish priest, suited to the state of the country and people, preaching the pure doctrines of the Gospel, visiting or catechising his flock, entering into the cabins of the poor to instruct them, to fortify their minds against the attempts of the Romish emissaries, and to reclaim those who had been led astray. Such, indeed, was the criminal sloth of the clergy, that it merits to be held up to the execration of all succeeding ages, as the grand cause of the deplorable state of religion in that country, and of the political calamities which have sprung from it, and have been so severely felt.

It was during this state of torpor—this departure from all godliness, that those distinguished advocates of evangelical truth, the Wesleys and Whitefield, with their zealous coadjutors in the blessed work, passed from England into that kingdom, since which time true religion has spread out its branches through many parts of that unhappy country. Mr. Whitefield was the

leader in that glorious enterprize ; and his first visit to Ireland, in 1738-39, one hundred years ago, had a more beneficial result. Dr. Burscough, Bishop of Limerick, received him with the utmost kindness and cordiality. At his Lordship's request, he preached in the cathedral to a very numerous audience, who appeared universally affected. After service the mayor sent twice to invite him to dinner, but he was engaged to the bishop, who offered him the use of his palace as long as he remained. At parting, the venerable prelate embraced him, and said, "Mr. Whitefield, God bless you—I wish you success abroad. Had you staid in town, this house should have been your home." At Dublin he was kindly received by Dr. Delany,* Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, by whom he was introduced to Dr. Rundel, Bishop of Derry, and Dr. Boulter, Primate of all Ireland, both of whom gave him most polite and pressing invitations to their houses. He dined with the latter; "and (says Mr. Whitefield,) was most courteously received both by him and his clergy ; having heard of me, the Bishop of Derry told me, from some friend at Gibraltar." He preached twice at St. Werburgh's and St. Andrew's to very crowded congregations, who seemed amazed at the novelty of the doctrines, and pleased with his eloquent and energetic style of delivery.

Mr. Thomas Williams† was the first itinerant Methodist preacher who visited Ireland. He crossed the channel in 1747, and began to preach in Dublin. He was a man of extraordinary powers and great zeal. Multitudes flocked to hear him, and

* Dr. Patrick Delany received his education in Trinity College, Dublin, of which he was a fellow. He was very intimate with Dean Swift, by whose interest he procured the Chancellorship of Christ's Church, and a Prebend in the Cathedral of St. Patrick. In 1744 he was made Dean of Down. He died at Bath in 1768. His widow, the celebrated Mrs. Delany, died in 1788. She was daughter of Colonel Bernard Granville, brother of George, Lord Lansdowne. This lady, so justly celebrated for her great literary acquirements, was much esteemed by George III. and Queen Charlotte, and resided constantly with their Majesties both at Kew and Windsor. Her most curious performance was the "Hortus Siccus," a botanical work in *ten volumes folio*, illustrated with admirable delineations on coloured paper of the genera plantarum. She became well acquainted with Lady Huntingdon, and was the intimate friend of Dr. Burney, the Duchess of Portland, Miss Seward, Swift, Horace Walpole, &c.

† Mr. Williams had been excluded by Mr. Wesley from the Methodist Society, August 2, 1744, for some slight offence ; but was re-admitted upon his repentance. He, however, finally quitted the Methodist body in 1755, having obtained more consistent views of divine truth. He occasionally itinerated for Mr. Whitefield, and in the course of his movements visited Londonderry, where he was instrumental in collecting a congregation. On his return to England he became known to Lady Huntingdon, who showed him many acts of friendship. Through her Ladyship's interest he afterwards obtained episcopal ordination, and resided in the neighbourhood of High Wycombe, in Buckinghamshire, where he continued for several years, and was extremely popular.

for some time he met with considerable opposition; but ultimately his labours were crowned with success. He soon formed a small society, several of whom God had given him as seals to his ministry, and they were made happy witnesses of the truths which he preached. Mr. Williams wrote an account of his success to Mr. Wesley, who soon hastened to the scene of action. The house they used for preaching was situated in Marlborough-street, and was originally designed for a Lutheran church. It contained about four hundred people; but four or five times that number might stand in the yard, which was very spacious.

Ireland had peculiar claims on Lady Huntingdon. Her Ladyship's grandfather was a baronet of that kingdom; her mother, the Countess Ferrers, was an Irish lady; many of her relatives were natives and residents of that country; and her eldest daughter, afterwards Countess of Moira, was, for half a century, an inhabitant of Ireland. It was no wonder, therefore, that the benevolent heart of the Countess should have been directed towards a country so dear to her from relative ties. About the latter part of the year 1749 we find the first manifestation of her intentions towards Ireland, and the ardent desire which always burned in her heart to make known the savour of that name which she loved. Mr. Charles Wesley, accompanied by several preachers, had succeeded his brother, and, after a short stay in the metropolis, proceeded to Cork, at which period a violent persecution raged against the Methodists in that city. Application was made to the Mayor, but redress could not be obtained; and the grand jury made that memorable presentment, which is worthy of being preserved in their records to all succeeding generations:—"We find and present CHARLES WESLEY to be a person of ill-fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of his Majesty's peace, and we pray that he may be transported!" Similar presentments were made against eight Methodist preachers and some respectable citizens, who belonged to the Methodist Society. A statement of the indignities and hardships which they underwent was forwarded to Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Whitefield, by Mr. Lunell, a respectable banker in Dublin. Her Ladyship, being then at Donnington-park, in Leicestershire, requested Mr. Whitefield to wait on the Speaker of the House of Commons, in her name, and demand redress.

"I have been with the Speaker (says he); Dr. Gifford* introduced

* Dr. Andrew Gifford, the respected minister of the Baptist meeting in Eagle-street, London. His intimacy with Sir Richard Ellys, the learned

me, and opened the matter well. His Honour expressed a great regard for your Ladyship, and great resentment at the indignities the poor sufferers underwent; but said, Lord Harrington or the Secretary of State were the most proper persons to be applied to: he did not doubt but that your Ladyship's application would get their grievances redressed. He treated me with great candour, and assured me no hurt was designed us by the state."

A well-attested narrative of the whole affair was presented to Lord Harrington, the King's representative in Ireland; and through Lady Huntingdon's influence a memorial was likewise presented to his Majesty by the Countess of Chesterfield. The Duke of Newcastle, then Secretary of State, was likewise spoken to; he expressed great resentment at the proceedings of the magistrates and clergy of Cork, and great personal respect for Lady Huntingdon, with whom he was well acquainted, the Duchess of Newcastle, Lady Lucy Pelham, and Lady Susannah Booth having frequently attended the preaching at her Ladyship's house.

"Blessed be God (writes Mr. Whitefield) for putting it into your Ladyship's power to help the poor sufferers of Cork. Last night I received a letter from Mr. Lunell, and purpose this night or to-morrow to write to him about what your Ladyship desires. Mr. Charles Wesley, I believe, is at his house."

In the summer of 1751 Mr. Whitefield paid a second visit to Ireland, and was most hospitably received in Dublin by Mr. Lunell, who had been awakened under the preaching of the first Methodist itinerant preachers that had visited that city. He was a man of opulence and great respectability; and, Mr.

author of "*Fortuita Sacra*," was of great service to him in life. Sir Richard appointed him his chaplain, and he was one of the heartiest friends Dr. Gifford ever had amongst the Protestant dissenters, retaining him in his office till his death. He continued to reside with Lady Ellys, and received an annual present of forty guineas from her till her marriage with Lord Le Despencer. Her ladyship and her sister, Lady Wheate, were on intimate terms with Lady Huntingdon, and often frequented her house to hear Mr. Whitefield and those eminent men who proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ in her drawing-rooms. Lady Le Despencer died in 1769.

Dr. Gifford obtained his diploma from Aberdeen. He had a peculiar delight in antiquities; and it is said that his private collection of coins, which was one of the most curious in Great Britain, was purchased by George II., as an addition to his own cabinet. The doctor's superior abilities, and his being of the Antiquarian Society, together with the personal friendship of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, Archbishop Herring, Sir Arthur Onslow, the Speaker, Lady Huntingdon, and his unshaken patron, Sir Richard Ellys, was the cause, under providence, of his being appointed Librarian to the British Museum, for which station he was remarkably suited. He died on the 19th of June, 1784, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. He left a handsome legacy to the church in Eagle-street, in whose service he ended his days. He published some sermons, and an edition of Folkes's "*Tables of Coins*," two vols. quarto.—See *Nichol's Bowyer and the Spiritual Magazine*.

Whitefield adds, in a letter to Lady Huntingdon, "a follower of Christ."

Mr. Whitefield preached about fourteen times in Dublin, seven times in Limerick, and on several occasions at Waterford, Cork, Bandon, Kinsale, Athlone, Belfast, and other places.—During this excursion he preached nearly *eighty* times.

His hearers in Dublin organized a class, and, procuring a place in Skinner-street, formed themselves, in 1752, into a public society. This step does not appear to have met with the approbation of Mr. Whitefield:—

"This morning (says he) I have been talking with dear Mr. Adams, and cannot help thinking but that you have run before the Lord, in forming yourselves into a public society, as you have done. I am sincere when I profess that I do not choose to set myself at the head of any party. When I came last to Ireland, my intention was to preach the Gospel to all; and if it should ever please the Lord of all Lords to send me thither again, I purpose to pursue the same plan. For I am a debtor to all of every denomination, and have no design, if I know any thing of this desperately wicked and deceitful heart, but to promote the common salvation of mankind. The love of Christ constrains me to this."

During this interval, the people assembling in Skinner's-alley obtained help from the late Rev. John Edwards, the early stages of whose life are involved in some obscurity; but we find him amongst the first set of preachers at the Tabernacle in London in 1746. In the course of his itinerant labours he visited almost every part of England, Wales, and Ireland. In Dublin his ministry proved highly acceptable to the congregation at Skinner's-alley.

It was a time of great persecution. The rage of the adversary was often so violent as to place his life in the most imminent danger. At one time, while he resided in Dublin, as he was returning from preaching at a village, a party of rude fellows, called the *Ormond Boys*, who used to assemble in the evening, recognized him as *Swaddling John*,* a term of reproach applied to the Methodists in Ireland; and seizing him with all the madness of their enmity against the truths he preached, declared they

* This term of reproach originated in the following circumstance: soon after the introduction of Methodism into Ireland, the Rev. John Cennick was preaching at Skinner's-alley on a Christmas-day. His text was Luke ii., 12, *Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger*. A drunken fellow who was listening at the door to pick up something by which he might ridicule this new religion, which had not yet obtained a name, hearing the word *swaddle* often repeated, ran along the streets, exclaiming, "O! these people are Swaddlers, they are Swaddlers!" The name quickly took, and became the badge of opprobrium through the kingdom of Ireland.

would throw him over the bridge into the Liffey. This was observed by an opposite party, who had assumed the appellation of *Liberty Boys*, residing on the other side of the river. They immediately encountered his assailants, determined they would rescue him out of their hands. This they accomplished, and carried him home in triumph; saying he was *their swaddling John*, for he lived on their side of the river, and none should hurt him. Thus God preserved his life, and made both the wrath and ignorance of man to praise him.

At another time, having preached out of doors, after he had finished his discourse a furious mob of the *White Boys* beset the house into which he had entered, and threatened to burn it to the ground, if he were permitted to continue in it. This desperate menace greatly alarmed the inhabitants, who were extremely unwilling to gratify their wicked desire. There was, however, but one way for his escape, and that was through a window which opened into a garden belonging to a justice of the peace, who was himself a bitter persecutor of the Methodists. Through this window he was let down, like the apostle Paul, in a basket. Here he stood some time in great consternation, fearing the family would observe him, and charge him with having broken into their garden for bad purposes, and that thereby both himself and religion might be injured. At length he ventured to knock at the door, asked for the magistrate, and being introduced, ingenuously stated the circumstances of his distressed situation, which had such an effect on the gentleman's mind, that he protected and entertained him at his house two days in a hospitable manner.

Some time after a number of soldiers who had been brought, under his ministry, to know the way of salvation, were, to their no small sorrow, removed to another town, not favoured with the light of the Gospel. Full of concern for the poor inhabitants, they wrote to him, requesting that he would come and preach there; with which request he readily complied, and took his journey for that purpose. When he came within a mile or two of the town, he was met by some of the pious soldiers, who informed him, with grief, that such were the cruel threatenings of the people against his life, that if he dared to preach they would not answer for his safety. Mr. Edwards, however, was not to be dissuaded from his purpose; for, on his arrival, he immediately preached in the street, and several persons of consequence, among whom was the mayor of the town, came to hear him, and by their presence and respectful behaviour prevented every kind of disturbance. After the service, the mayor invited him to breakfast with several of the principal inhabitants, and told him

they were very glad he was come, that the people were extremely dissolute in their manners, and the clergy, both Protestants and Catholics, exceedingly remiss in their duty, and they hoped the Methodists would succeed in their endeavours to reform the town. These gentlemen subscribed to the support of stated preaching in a room, which was fitted up for the purpose; and there the Word of God was crowned with such a blessing, that a religious society was soon formed, to the great joy of the poor soldiers.

In the summer of 1757 Mr. Whitefield visited Ireland for the last time. His reception in Dublin was as promising as on former occasions: congregations were very large, and a blessing appeared to attend his ministry;* but not having a regular supply of preachers, some divisions took place amongst his hearers. One portion laid the foundation of the present flourishing church of the United Brethren,† another formed a Baptist congregation, whilst the scattered remains continued feeble and unsupported, till Lady Huntingdon was enabled to send them some suitable supply.

The Rev. Henry Piers, vicar of Bexley, in Kent, an awakened

* On Mr. Whitefield's former visit to Dublin he preached in a more confined place in the week days, and a few times ventured out to Oxmantown-green, then a large open place, like Moorfields in the old time, situated near the Royal Barracks, where the Ormond and Liberty boys, two factions amongst the lowest class of the people, generally assembled every Sunday to fight with each other. The congregations then were very numerous; the word seemed to come with power, and no noise or disturbance ensued. This encouraged Mr. Whitefield to venture again; and he gave notice that he would preach there during this visit to Dublin. He went through the barracks, the door of which opened into Oxmantown-green, and pitched his tent near the barrack-walls, not doubting of the protection or at least interposition of the officers and soldiery, if there should be occasion. Vast was the multitude that attended. After singing and prayer, Mr. Whitefield preached without molestation, only now and then a few stones and clods of dirt thrown at him. It being war time, he took occasion to exhort his hearers, as was his usual practice, not only to fear God, but to honour the King; and prayed for success to the King of Prussia. When he had finished, and thought to return home the way he came, by the barracks, to his great surprise access was denied; and he was obliged to go near half a mile, from one end of the green to the other, through thousands of Papists, who finding him unattended (for a soldier and four preachers who came with him had fled) threw volleys of stones upon him from all quarters, and made him reel backwards and forwards till he was almost breathless and covered with blood. At last, with great difficulty, he staggered to the door of a minister's house near the Green, which was kindly opened to him. For a while he continued speechless and panting for breath; but his weeping friends having given him some cordial, and washed his wounds, a coach was procured, in which, amidst the oaths, imprecations, and threatenings of the Popish rabble, he got safe home, and joined in a hymn of thanksgiving with his friends. In a letter written to a friend, just after this event, he says: "I received many blows and wounds; one was particularly large, and near my temple; I thought of Stephen, and was in hopes, like him, to go off in this bloody triumph to the immediate presence of my Master."

† The late Rev. John Swertner, who for many years was the worthy minister of the Moravian chapel in Dublin, married the only child of the Rev. John

clergyman, who had attended the first Methodist conference in London, and had preached with great zeal in various parts of the kingdom, was soon after presented to a living in Ireland. About the same period the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley became rector of Loughrea, in the diocese of Tuam, a living in the gift of the Earl of Clanricarde, whose great-grandfather had espoused an heiress of the house of Shirley.*

On the first of April, 1760, Mr. Wesley landed in Dublin; and some days after preached in the square of the Royal Barracks, without any disturbance. He preached there to very attentive congregations several times; and on one occasion, being a rainy day, an offer was made him of the riding-house, a very large commodious building, designed by Lord Chesterfield, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, for a church, but never used as such till Mr. Wesley preached in it. Some soldiers were exercising there when Mr. Wesley arrived, and the officers forbade them going away before the sermon was ended. There were at this period upwards of five hundred members belonging to the Methodist society in Dublin. Mr. Wesley made an extensive tour through the kingdom, preaching wherever he could obtain a congregation; visited Moira, the residence of the Earl of Moira, Lady Huntingdon's son-in-law, and on a tombstone, near the church, opposite his Lordship's, preached to a considerable number of people.

During this visit to Ireland Mr. Wesley visited the county of Galway, where he preached frequently, and often to very numerous congregations. On the return of Mr. Shirley to Ireland, after the arrangement of Lord Ferrers' affairs, he was not so fortunate as to meet Mr. Wesley, who was then travelling in a distant part of the kingdom.

From some unexplained cause Mr. Charles Wesley, a short time prior to this period, ceased to itinerate in conjunction with his brother. At his first visit to Ireland he was accompanied

Cennick, whose zealous labours in that city were productive of the most beneficial results. The labours of the late Mr. Latrobe were also much owned of God. He was father of Mr. Latrobe, minister of the Brethren's chapel, in Fetter-lane, London.

* Mr. Shirley was cousin-german to Lady Huntingdon, and three of his brothers were successively Earls Ferrers. His mother was the daughter of Sir Walter Clarges, of Aston, in Hertfordshire, Bart., and grand-daughter of Philip, fourth Earl of Pembroke, and first Earl of Montgomery. His intimacy and near relationship with the Countess of Huntingdon brought him in close contact with many of the leading characters in the religious world; but it was the ministry and conversation of Mr. Venn that was blessed in a peculiar manner to his soul, so that he ever after styled himself "*his son in the Gospel*." They were nearly cotemporaries, Mr. Venn having the advantage of a few months only. Dr. Conyers, Mr. Madan, Mr. Newton, and Mr. Venn, by an odd coincidence, were precisely of the same age, having all been born in the same month.

by Mr. Charles Perronet, son of the Rev. Vincent Perronet, the venerable vicar of Shoreham. On a subsequent visit to Ireland he prosecuted his labours with great success. Shortly after his marriage he ceased to intinerate; he still, however, continued firmly attached to the Methodists, and laboured by every means which his situation would permit to promote the good of the societies.

After he had ceased to travel, he divided his labours chiefly between London and Bristol.* His residence was at the latter place, and whenever Lady Huntingdon was at Clifton or Bath Mr. Charles Wesley was usually her chaplain, frequently administering the Sacrament at her house, and preaching to great numbers of the nobility and gentry. He was much attached to Mr. Shirley; and his kind attention to him and Lady Huntingdon during the season of their domestic calamity called forth their warmest gratitude. Towards the close of the year 1760 his health was much impaired, and he ceased for some time to visit the metropolis.

Mr. Shirley was now appointed one of Lady Huntingdon's chaplains, and on his return from Brighton, Bath, and other places where he had been preaching for her Ladyship, he found the churches in which he had formerly ministered closed against him. The clergy, whose hand on these occasions is always first in the transgression, fired with envy and resentment, as in thus saying and doing he reproached them also, conspired to exclude him from the pulpits of the city churches. Though carefully conforming to established rules, and strictly regular, he became everywhere the object of reproach, because his conduct could not but reflect on those who chose not to follow such examples. He laboured, indeed, under many discouragements. Everywhere he carried the stamp of peculiarity, and was marked by his brethren. All the superior orders shunned his society, and he was often treated by them with much insolence and oppression. But his being prohibited the use of the churches turned out to the furtherance of the Gospel. Thus does the Lord always bring good out of evil—the wrath of man shall praise him.

In the year 1767 the great Head of the Church was graciously pleased to raise up a mighty instrument in the person of the late Rev. Richard De Courcy, whose quick and lively talents contributed powerfully to the extension of divine truth. The descendant of an ancient and respectable family in Ireland, and

* The Journal of Mr. Charles Wesley appears to have been discontinued after he had ceased to travel; and the events of the last *thirty* years of his life the official biographers of the Wesleys have thrown into half a dozen pages!

distantly related to the family of Lord Kinsale, Mr. De Courcy was justly entitled to that deference and respect due to persons of his rank, and which his superior abilities so eminently claimed for him. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and at the age of twenty-three received deacon's orders in the cathedral church of Clonfert,* as curate to Mr. Shirley. On one occasion, being in Dublin, he was invited to preach in St. Andrew's church, and the fame of his preaching brought a large congregation who filled every part of the edifice. The cry of Methodism had already gone forth, and whilst the prayers were reading the pulpit was seized by order of the metropolitan, Dr. Arthur Smythe, to the exclusion of Mr. De Courcy, who finding himself thus treated, conferred not with flesh and blood, but immediately withdrew, intimating that he should preach in the open air. He was quickly followed by the congregation, and, ascending a tombstone, proclaimed to the surrounding multitude the glad tidings of great joy, that there is a Saviour, even Christ the Lord.

Such zeal and such conduct, but, above all, the doctrines which he preached, so dissimilar to anything around him and in other churches, soon exposed Mr. De Courcy to the malignant attacks of a host of enemies. He had committed the unpardonable sin of daring to preach the everlasting Gospel, and not fearing to offend those who hate the light. On him, therefore, the hand of authority was laid heavily. The bishop became offended—he was refused a licence and priest's orders. But none of these things moved him. Insulted as he had been, and without prospects of any preferment, he had numerous friends who loved and esteemed him. On Mr. Shirley's representation of his case to Lady Huntingdon, her Ladyship immediately applied to the Bishop of Lichfield† to ordain him, and wrote him an urgent invitation to come to England and aid her in the great work in which she was engaged.

He accepted the offer, and about the beginning of May

* By Dr. Dennis Cumberland, afterwards Bishop of Kilmore. He was grandson of that learned prelate, Dr. Richard Cumberland, Bishop of Peterborough. Going to Ireland with Lord Halifax, the intimate friend of Lady Huntingdon and Dr. Doddridge, he was made Bishop of Clonfert, from whence, in 1772, he was translated to Kilmore. He died in 1775. This prelate married Joanna, daughter of Dr. Richard Bentley, master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and was father of Richard Cumberland, a dramatic and miscellaneous writer. Of his poetical performances none are likely to be long remembered, except "Calvary;" but his "Observer" holds a distinguished rank among the works of the British essayists. He died in 1811.

† Dr. John Egerton, who at the age of thirty-five was consecrated Bishop of Bangor. His father was Bishop of Hereford. In 1768 he was translated to the see of Lichfield and Coventry, and in 1771, promoted to be Bishop of Durham. By his marriage with Lady Anne Sophia Grey, daughter of Henry Duke of Kent,

arrived in England. He immediately waited on Mr. Whitefield, who was then in London, at the Tabernacle-house.*

Lady Huntingdon, finding the cloud did not move in the direction of Ireland, gathered around her the able men who served her, and directed them to pour out the tidings of salvation in England. To them was Mr. De Courcy added, and also Mr. Newton, whose talents, habits, and inclinations fitted him for a stated residence, as a parochial minister.†

He, too, knew how to treat with Christian friendship those who, out of regard to conscience, separated from the communion of the Church of England. Probably, the Church does not contain a clergyman of superior liberality towards Methodists and Dissenters. This will, perhaps, be accounted a reproach to his memory by those who represent all Christian affection to the *Sectaries* as criminal and derogatory to the dignity of the Established Church; but if we form our estimate of the Christian temper from the example of Christ and his immediate followers, and if we look forward to the day in which the love of his disciples to each other will be particularly noticed by our common Lord, we shall rejoice in every proof of ministerial candour such as Mr. Newton so uniformly displayed.

he left a daughter, and two sons, successively Earls of Bridgewater. It does not appear that Lady Huntingdon's application was attended with success, for Mr. De Courcy did not obtain priest's orders for some time after his arrival in England. The bishop died in 1787.

* By some peculiar accident, his apparel not being brought to town with him, he was obliged for several days to appear in his gown and cassock, which, together with his very juvenile appearance, excited no small attention as he walked along the streets. On being introduced to Mr. Whitefield, the latter took off his cap, and bending towards Mr. De Courcy, placed his hand in a deep scar in his head, saying, "Sir, this wound I got in your country for preaching Christ." [Mr. Whitefield alluded to the circumstance which occurred when he preached at Oxmantown-green.] Mr. De Courcy afterwards observed to a friend, that this circumstance much endeared this noble champion of the Gospel to him. Mr. Cornelius Winter happening to come into the room, Mr. Whitefield committed the stranger to his attention, saying, "Take care of this gentleman." From this period an intimate friendship took place, which lasted till Mr. Whitefield's death. On the next day, which was Sunday, Mr. De Courcy preached at Tottenham-court Chapel, from Zach. xiii. 7, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." His youthful appearance and pleasing address fixed the attention of the numerous audience, and laid the foundation of his future popularity.

† Others, probably, are equally adapted, as well as called, to itinerant labours; but Mr. Newton, in his "Cardiphonia," (vol. ii. p. 291), seems to deprecate too much the endeavours of those who travel about to preach the Gospel. "I wish," says he, "there were more intinerant preachers. If a man has grace and zeal and but little fund, let him go and diffuse the substance of a dozen sermons over as many counties; but you have natural and acquired abilities," &c. And again, (p. 245), "I wish well to irregulars and itinerants who love and preach the Gospel. I am content that they should labour that way, who have not talents nor fund to support the character of a parochial minister; but I think you are qualified for more important service."

CHAPTER XXXV.

Mr. Townsend's visit to Dublin—Lady Saxton—Mr. Alderman Townsend—Lord Shelburne—Mr. Phillips—Mrs. Paul—Mrs. Kiernan—Temporary Chapel—Lady Huntingdon sends Ministers to Ireland—Mr. Mead—Mr. Hawkesworth—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Pentycross—Mr. Rowland Hill—Meeting in Wales—Independent Churches—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Lloyd—Plunket-street Chapel opened—Opposition—Letter from Mrs. Paul—Several of the Nobility go to Lady Huntingdon's Chapel—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Hawkesworth visits Waterford—Mrs. Bennis—Methodist Preachers—Mr. Hawkesworth solicits ordination—Lady Huntingdon's Letter on that subject.

THE Rev. Joseph Townsend, fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, and rector of Pewsey, in Wiltshire, reached Dublin* as Mr. De Courcy quitted it, sent by the Countess of Huntingdon to diffuse the light of righteousness. It was he whom her Ladyship had sent into Scotland, at the request of Lady Glenorchy. He and Dr. Haweis had previously studied together in Edinburgh, under Dr. Cullen; and his sister, Mrs. Wordsworth, afterwards became the wife of his fellow student. His labours in Ireland were successful. It was while he was in Ireland that the family† of John Phillips, Esq., was converted.

On Mr. Shirley and Mr. Townsend representing to Lady

* On board the same packet were the Earl of Shelburne, afterwards Viscount Calne, Earl of Wycombe, and Marquis of Lansdowne, then Foreign Secretary, Edmund Burke, Mrs. Vesey Dawson, the friend of Hannah Moore, and foundress of the Bluestocking Club, Sir Charles and Lady Saxton, whom Mr. Townsend knew. His father, Alderman Townsend, was representative of Lord Shelburne's borough of Calne, and his supporter in many Parliaments. At Shelburne House there Mr. Townsend was a frequent visitor, and was introduced by Lord Shelburne to most of the nobility of Ireland. His father was averse to his religious connexions, and in presenting him with the living of Pewsey, demanded as a condition that he would never preach in Moorfields on a joint stool, and he gained access to many pulpits.

† With this amiable family Mr. Shirley became extremely intimate; and on the 27th of August, 1766, was united to Henrietta Maria, eldest daughter of Mr. Phillips; and left issue one son, the Rev. Walter Shirley, born the 11th October, 1768; and three daughters, viz., Frances Anne, born the 6th of May, 1770, married the Rev. John Going: his eldest son, also a clergyman, married Wilhelmina, daughter of the late Dr. Roe, and sister of the Rev. Peter Roe, rector of St. Mary's, Kilkenny; Henrietta, Eleonara, born 11th August, 1772, married the Rev. Henry Bunbury, and has a numerous family; Anne Augusta, born 29th November, 1775, married Gabriel Maturin, Esq., and has issue. Mrs. Shirley died 15th December, 1792.

A sister of Mrs. Shirley married the late George Kiernan, Esq., and left issue a son and five daughters—Harriet, Augusta, Selina, Sophia, and Matilda;

Huntingdon the deplorable state of spiritual destitution prevailing in Dublin, she commissioned them to purchase, build, or hire some sound commodious edifice, for the performance of divine worship, *according to the forms of the Established Church*. At the suggestion of Mrs. Paul,* the Merchant Tailors' Hall was procured for this purpose, and solemnly dedicated to the God of our salvation. Several ministers from England were sent at the sole expense of Lady Huntingdon, and their preaching was attended with very considerable success.†

In the year 1772 Lady Huntingdon called in all the students who were labouring in England, Wales, and Ireland, to

of whom Sophia married the Rev. George Hamilton, son of the late Dr. Hugh Hamilton, Bishop of Ossory, and nephew of the late Baron Hamilton. Mr. Hamilton was the author of a work on the study of the Hebrew Scriptures, &c. Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton are both deceased.

Colonel Phillips, the brother of Mrs. Shirley and Mrs. Kiernan, sailed round the world with Captain Cook. He married a daughter of Dr. Burney, the celebrated musician, and sister of Madame D'Arblay, the authoress.

* This excellent woman was wife to Dr. Thomas Paul, Dean of Cashel, and sister to Dr. James Hawkins, Bishop of Raphoe, and Sir W. Hawkins, Ulster King of Arms. She was for many years the intimate friend and constant correspondent of Lady Huntingdon. In the Letters of her Ladyship frequent mention is made of Mrs. Paul, Mrs. Shirley, and Miss Phillips, afterwards Mrs. Kiernan. She was the only daughter of John Hawkins, Esq., Ulster King of Arms, by Catherine, daughter of Dr. William Smith, of Dublin. Her grandfather, likewise, held the same situation at the Herald's Office. Dean Paul was the youngest son of Jeffrey Paul, Esq., for many years the representative in Parliament for the county of Carlow; and his mother, the only daughter of Richard Christmas, Esq., of Whitfield, county of Waterford, and member of Parliament for the city of Waterford. The eldest brother of Dean Paul married Miss Carew, daughter of Robert Carew, Esq., of Ballynamona, county of Waterford, and member of Parliament for Dungarvon, and left a son, Joshua Paul, created a Baronet of Ireland in 1794, father of the present Sir Joshua Christmas Paul, of Paulville, county of Carlow. She separated from her husband on account of his dislike to her religious principles, and afterwards lived in Hereford, hearing and doing good.

The Bishop of Raphoe was father of the present Admiral Sir James Hawkins Whitshed, Bart. A granddaughter of the Bishop, a daughter of the Dean of Clonfert, is married to the Rev. Mr. Verschoye, an evangelical clergyman in Dublin.

† The first was the Rev. Henry Mead, afterwards lecturer of St. John's, Wapping, and minister of Ram's Chapel, Hackney. He arrived in the summer of 1771. He asked for assistance, suggesting Mr. Rowley, who was by that time fixed at Warwick. Lady Huntingdon wrote to Mr. Hawkesworth, observing—"Dear Mead is exceedingly blessed, and wishes for another helper; and therefore I shall have Ellis [who was educated at Trevecca]: and you shall go to Dublin. When you can spare time let me hear from you; as I ever am, dear Hawkesworth, your faithful and affectionate friend, S. HUNTINGDON." Mr. Pentycross was then curate of Hawley, near Ryegate, and had not obtained priests' orders, or he would have gladly gone to Ireland, where, as Mr. Shirley wrote, there was an opening in one of the city churches. Mr. Pentycross was educated at Christ's Hospital, and distinguished himself as a Grecian; whence he went to Pembroke College, Cambridge, and became the friend of the Rev. Rowland Hill. He had before acquired the notice of Horace Walpole by his

the College in Wales, to form a mission to North America, as very pressing and encouraging letters had been received by her Ladyship, requesting her to send faithful and zealous ministers thither. The following letter was addressed to Mr. Mead and Mr. Hawkesworth, desiring them to be in Wales early in the month of October, and accompanied by a circular notice, which was to be read in all the congregations in her Ladyship's Connexion:—

“My dear Mead and Hawkesworth,—The enclosed paper so fully explains my request, that I must beg, as the only proof of any regard to me, you will not fail of being present, and lose no time. Depend upon all things being ready, that the day after the meeting, either one or more students, as you both think best, shall be ready to set off for Dublin. Assure my Dublin friends the means of settling matters for their advantage will be by sparing you for one fortnight. Read the paper to the society, as directed by me, with the assurance of what I say; and request from me their meeting for prayer and fasting on Friday, the 9th of October. I depend upon this as the one single instance of regard I shall ever either ask or desire. I must repeat the surprising success of our labours everywhere. How many times ten thousand hear each day I dare not say; and the calls are increasing so fast, that my heart is broken not to be able to supply all. And this opening in America is the astonishment of all that love or fear the Lord. I hope to be at the College October the 1st or 2nd. May all blessings attend you; and do not fail to be with us. I must insist, if alive, that you come by Wales directly to the College. The amazing blessings before us engage me to write so many letters, that you must excuse my not being more particular; and believe me, my dear Mead and Hawkesworth, your very affectionate friend,
“Oathall, Sept. 9th, 1772. S. HUNTINGDON.”

Early in the month of October, Mr. Mead and Mr. Hawkesworth arrived at Trevecca, to attend the proposed meeting. They were soon followed by Mr. Shirley and the Rev. Charles Stewart Eccles, a respectable clergyman, son of — Eccles, of Ecclesville, in the county of Tyrone, Esq., a gentleman of highly respectable family and very considerable fortune. As the circular notice which accompanied her ladyship's letter to Mr. Mead and Mr. Hawkesworth, and the particulars of this affair, will be amply detailed in another part of this work, it will be unnecessary to advert to them in this place. As soon as the

poetical talent, and by his skill in reciting from plays, of which he was very fond. He was also the friend of the poet, Gray; but Rowland Hill and Dr. Coetlage taught him his part in the great healer of the world. He was the friend of Mr. Simpson and General Oglethorpe, and the “Dear Pentty” of Mr. Whitefield. He being unable to proceed, her ladyship applied to the Rev. Rowland Hill, who was then kept on a very scanty allowance by Sir Rowland, in order to prevent his itinerancy. He agreed to go, and so did Mr. Glascott.

meeting was terminated, Mr. Hawkesworth returned to Dublin. Many of the leading members of the congregation, for some considerable time, had intimated a wish that they might be organized as an *Independent* church. Several meetings were held, and resolutions to that effect were passed, though not unanimously. These resolutions were forwarded to Lady Huntingdon for her approbation; but her ladyship's liberal system could never countenance anything so narrow, and, in her opinion, so ill calculated to further the cause and interest of the Redeemer among mankind. Her ladyship's answer is important, as it fully explains her sentiments on the subject of *Dissenting Churches*, which cannot fail to be read with attention by all who profess to belong to her Connexion at the present day:—

“ You know so well my sentiments of INDEPENDENT congregations, that I need not enlarge; but I have heard it is determined by the people that they mean to collect themselves into a body for this purpose, and support a minister by subscription. You know my liberal way of thinking, by having all follow the light the Lord vouchsafes them; and therefore I must leave it under this situation. I can be no longer able to serve them, as according to what I do know, or have known, my call is a general and universal one; and I believe this to be that of the College: and my protection, as a *Dissenting Church*, is quite out of the order of all my work; and, if this become their settled choice, I think you will like to come to England—the sooner the better, after you see they have made their appointment of a minister. As I am satisfied you will not sacrifice the whole of your ministry to a handful of people, while the calls for you here are so many and so great—and nothing could distress me more than for you to sink into the formality of a single congregation, while your ministry is so generally owned of the Lord—therefore, dear Hawkesworth, hasten to us, and help us. Eight drawn to America makes us much distressed for help. Be so good as to order the furniture which Mead brought to be sold, and the lodging given up, as soon as possible; as, under these circumstances, I consider myself wholly at liberty to withdraw.”

Similar letters were addressed to Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Wilson.*

* John Lloyd, Esq., and Richard Wilson, Esq., men of influence and fortune, and the steady friends of the Countess. Miss Anne Lloyd, a daughter of Mr. Lloyd, married the late Mr. Walcot, a gentleman of fortune, and many years a member of the Tabernacle Society in Bristol. He was the descendant of the ancient family of Walcot, of Croagh, in the county of Clare, Ireland, and nephew of William Cecil, first Lord Glentworth, father of the present Earl of Limerick, and Eleanor Lady Hunt, mother of the present Sir Aubrey de Vere, Bart., who married Mary, eldest daughter of Stephen Edward Rice, Esq., of Mount Trenchard, in the county of Limerick, and sister of the Right Hon. Thomas Spring Rice, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and son-in-law of Lord Limerick. Mrs. Walcot died in 1782, and her funeral sermon was preached at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel, at Bath, by Mr. Pentycross, from 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57, and was afterwards published.

From subsequent letters of Lady Huntingdon, it appeared that the plan of erecting a chapel in Dublin was abandoned; and, with the sanction and advice of Mr. Shirley, the old Presbyterian meeting-house, in Plunket-street, was rented. For several years before its dissolution the church was in a very low state: the sentiments and preaching of the ministers who officiated were extremely unpopular, and but ill adapted to preserve the church from a languishing condition. After some feeble attempts to revive the expiring interest, the society dissolved, and the meeting-house was disposed of to Lady Huntingdon. Having undergone some alterations and repairs, Plunket-street Chapel was opened with the use of the Liturgy of the Church of England, and upon the plan adopted in her Ladyship's other chapels, early in 1773. A numerous congregation was soon raised, by the blessing of the great Head of the Church, upon the labours of her Ladyship's ministers. Mr. Shirley, Mr. Eccles, Dr. Peckwell, with several other clergymen and students from Trevecca, preached there with great acceptance and success; and very many, by their ministry in that place, were added to the Church of such as shall be saved.

Not long after her Ladyship's chapel was opened, opposition began to lift her frowning face against all those whom the world denominated Methodists:—

“Multitudes (says Mrs. Paul, in a letter to Lady Huntingdon,) attend him everywhere, and God, even our own God, is blessing his own most precious word to the conversion of sinners, notwithstanding the general opposition that is raised against the great doctrines which he preaches, which are everywhere reviled as Methodism and rank enthusiasm. My brother is in a mighty rage at dear Mr. Shirley's preaching in a conventicle, as he terms your Ladyship's chapel, and threatens to have him stripped of his gown. But the Dean says he cannot be prevented from preaching where he likes, so long as he conforms to the rules and doctrines of the Church. They have frequent altercations on this subject, and on the doctrines which Mr. Shirley holds forth in the pulpit with such fidelity and zeal, in which I sometimes also bear my part, and, in my humble way, bear my testimony for God and his Christ. Many of the clergy have made a representation of his conduct and preaching to our new Archbishop,* who refuses to take any notice of it, not caring to make himself disliked by the adoption of any disagreeable proceedings on entering a new see. Last Sunday evening, Lady Longford† brought Lady Anne and Lady Selina‡ to the chapel to hear Mr. Shirley. They were much pleased

* Dr. John Cradock, who died in 1778, father of the present Lord Howden.

† The Viscountess Longford, a peeress in her own right, and grandmother of the late Marquis of Headfort and the Duchess of Wellington.

‡ Daughters of the Countess of Moira, and grand-daughters of Lady Hun-

with the singing, but I have not seen Lady Longford since to know the particulars. I have been confidently assured that two of Lady Betty's* brothers, the clergyman† and Commissioner Beresford (who is said to be in great grief for the recent loss of his wife), Lord Roden, and a large party of fashionables, have gone privately to hear him. My brother having heard it reported, asked Mr. Beresford if it were true, and he did not deny it; but my brother's being extremely angry prevented him saying anything about the sermon."

The latter part of the year 1772 and commencement of 1773, Mr. Wesley's societies in Waterford, Limerick, and other places were in great confusion, owing to the controversy relative to the *Minutes of Conference* of 1770, and to the tone of preaching adopted by several of the ministers, in consequence of Mr. Fletcher's "*Vindication of the Doctrines contained in the Minutes*,"—a work which was actively and industriously circulated among the members of the Methodist body.

"By the frequent neglect of preaching (says Mrs. Bennis, a favourite correspondent of Mr. Wesley's), and the almost total neglect of discipline, the people are scattered; and of the few that remain, some are grieved and some offended with this new method of preaching salvation by works, as they have for many years been taught to depend on the Lord Jesus alone, and through his merit and death alone to seek for justification here, and a final acquittance at the great day. But now, after all, are we to be made perfect in the flesh, and to be accepted only for our works; and even at the great day is our faith, nay, and the righteousness of Christ, to profit us nothing, but our works only? If this were the case, might I not ask—who then can be saved?"

Such is the language used by one of Mr. Wesley's favourite correspondents, who had resided many years in Limerick, and was at this period in Waterford,—a woman of strong sense and considerable information, who, through a long life, was a consistent follower of her Divine Master. Many became dissatisfied with the doctrines taught in Mr. Wesley's societies. In Dublin, likewise there was much discontent. "I have been

tingdon. Lady Anne Rawdon was married in February, 1788, at the residence of her uncle, the Earl of Huntingdon, in St. James's Place, London, to the Earl of Ailesbury. Her venerable grandmother was present on this occasion. Lady Selina married George, sixth Earl of Granard. Lady Ailesbury died in 1813, and Lady Granard a few years since in Paris. Lord Granard died at his residence in Paris, 1837.

* Lady Betty Cobb, whose husband was a near relation to Lady Huntingdon.

† The Hon. and Rev. William Beresford, third son of the Earl of Tyrone. He was at this period rector of Urney, in the diocese of Derry, and eventually became Archbishop of Tuam. He was raised to the peerage in 1812, as Baron Decies, and died in 1819.

credibly informed (says Mrs. Paul) that great dissatisfaction prevails among Mr. Wesley's people, owing chiefly to the influence which Mr. Fletcher's book has on the preaching of the ministers in his society. Of this book I know nothing but from report. It appears, however, to have unsettled the minds of many, from what I can learn; and a few have left the society in consequence of it." Many in different parts of the kingdom becoming dissatisfied with the new doctrine taught in the Methodist society, application was made to Mr. Shirley to prevail on Lady Huntingdon to send some of her ministers to Ireland. This was an embarrassing affair for her Ladyship. The great success of the work in every part of England and Wales engaged every minister and student in the Connexion, so that not one could be spared. "I am at my wit's end (says her Ladyship) to find help for the people of Ireland. I have written to Mr. Hill, but as his family are so opposed, I cannot hope that he will be suffered to go on this mission; and the work so prospers under dear Mr. Glascott and Mr. Peckwell that I dare not remove them. A student from the College shall go immediately—you will then be able to visit some of the large towns, whilst he remains with the people in Dublin; but I am in great hopes of sending some who may get admittance to the churches, perhaps Mr. Venn, Mr. Madan, or Mr. Talbot—I shall write to them without delay, and inform them of this opening."

From some causes unexplained, Lady Huntingdon was unable to prevail on Messrs. Venn, Madan, or Talbot to visit Ireland at this time. The Rev. Thomas Jones, who had preached with great acceptance and success in different parts of the kingdom, was sent over without delay. Soon after his arrival, Mr. Hawkesworth visited Limerick and Waterford, and at the latter place met with considerable encouragement, which induced him to prolong his stay. A place for preaching in was soon hired, and his ministry was extremely well attended. Mr. Wesley was soon apprised of this step by his correspondent, Mrs. Bennis*

* Mrs. Eliza Bennis, who deserves a record in the annals of Methodism, emigrated to America, and died at Philadelphia, June, 1802, aged seventy-seven years. A few years after her decease, two small works were published by her son, Mr. Thomas Bennis, entitled "Christian Correspondence; being a collection of Letters, written by the late Rev. John Wesley and several Methodist Preachers in connexion with him, to the late Mrs. Eliza Bennis, with her answers;"—and "The Journal of the late Mrs. Eliza Bennis, from 1749 to 1780, with an Account of her last Sickness and Death." These were published in Philadelphia, and the volume of letters, from whence the above extracts are given, was republished in Cork, in 1819. They are both extremely scarce, and contain much interesting information relative to the early struggles of Methodism in Ireland. The letters of one of her correspondents, Mr. John Stretton,

—“ Mr. Hawkesworth, a Calvinistic minister under Lady Huntingdon, has come here, and preaches regularly at Methodist hours, in a large room, and to great congregations; he is to stay here for some time, and when he goes another is to be sent in his room. Our people, though forbidden by the preachers, go almost constantly to hear him. I have spoken to several, with little effect, and have heard his discourses so praised, that I did wish to hear him, but would not show the example: but I yesterday paid him a visit at his lodging, and had an hour's conversation with him.”

The intelligence conveyed in this letter was by means agreeable to Mr. Wesley. We leave every reader to make his own comments on his extraordinary reply to Mrs. Bennis, which has been preserved in the published correspondence of that lady:—“ It is far better (says he) for our people not to hear Mr. Hawkesworth—Calvinism will do them no good. Until Mr. Hill* and his associates puzzled the cause, it was as plain as plain could be; the Methodists always held, and have declared a thousand times, the death of Christ is the meritorious *cause* of our salvation (that is, pardon, holiness, glory); living obedient faith is the *condition* of glory. This Mr. Fletcher has so illustrated and confirmed as I think scarce any other individual has done either before or since the Apostles. I enclose James Perfect's† letter to you, on purpose that you may talk with him: he has both an honest heart and a good understanding, but you entirely mistake his doctrine. He preaches salvation by faith in the same manner that my brother and I have done, and as Mr. Fletcher (one of the finest writers of the age) has beautifully explained it. None of us talk of our being accepted *for our works*—that is the Calvinistic slander; but all maintain we are not saved *without works*; that works are a *condition* (though not the meritorious cause) of final salvation; it is by faith in the righteousness and blood of Christ that we are enabled to do all good

who was stationed at Harbour-Grace, Newfoundland, give many interesting particulars of the labours of the Rev. Lawrence Coughlan, a clergyman in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, who had been sent out to that country by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

* Afterwards the well-known Sir Richard Hill, Bart., of Hawkstone.

† Mr. James Perfect, or Perfett, was one of the *fifty-three* preachers who were present at the Conference in Bristol, in 1771, when Mr. Wesley drew up the “ Recantation” (which will be found in the next chapter) which was signed by Mr. Perfect. He had been admitted a preacher the preceding year, but was expelled in 1775, for what cause is unknown. He was extremely hostile to Mr. Hawkesworth and the ministers sent to Waterford by Lady Huntingdon, and from the pulpit, as well as in private, warned and admonished the people not to hear them.

works; and it is for the sake of these that all who fear God and work righteousness are accepted of him." *

How long Mr. Hawkesworth continued at Waterford is uncertain. He was succeeded by Mr. Jones and other ministers in the Connexion. They likewise visited many other places, and were instrumental in laying the foundations of congregations at Cork and Sligo, which were afterwards in connexion with Lady Huntingdon. In 1796, when the late Rev. Samuel Pearce, of Birmingham, was in her band, he addressed a letter to the late Dr. Carey of India, in which he says:—"Lady Huntingdon's Connexion has one society here, the only one in the kingdom perhaps, except Sligo, where there is another." The congregation in Cork has long ranked with the Independent denomination.

As the congregation in Dublin continued to increase, the people became desirous of having the Lord's Supper dispensed to them, conceiving it peculiarly calculated to bind them all together in the bonds of Christian love, and inflame their zeal for the Redeemer's cause. Mr. Hawkesworth was also desirous of obtaining ordination, and with this view solicited her Ladyship's permission. The reply of his noble patroness is worthy of preservation:—

"My dear Hawkesworth,—Last night, and not before, I received your letter, dated October 2nd, which was exceedingly sweet to me. Such a spirit of simplicity and godly sincerity breathed through the whole, that revived my heart abundantly, and caused me to bless our adorable Immanuel, that he had given me such a companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus, to labour with us in the mighty work appointed for us upon earth by him. O! it is great indeed, and is extending far and wide; and from the number of young men I have received into the College (devoted souls!) it looks as if the Lord seemed resolved to cover the earth with the knowledge of his truth by their means. I shall write to-night to the College, and lay before them the call for Ireland, and your removal from thence; and I hope for two, and also for Mr. Peckwell, to be with that work this winter. This last I am not sure of; but two students will certainly be sent to change in the country, and one of them to be residing in Dublin, that the work there may be well carried on. Indeed, dear Hawkesworth, my heart is much with you, and ever since I have known you you have been as a dearly beloved son to me in the Gospel. Your faithfulness and great disinterestedness in the Lord's labours have so much united my heart to you, that it has been matter of self-denial I have so long parted from you. But till I found your heart first free to remove, I feared I might call you before the Lord's time from a people you were so owned of God and blessed to. I have

* Letters and Correspondence of Mrs. Eliza Bennis, p. 71.

often wanted you for plans where the greatest trust must be reposed; and, therefore, I am most abundantly thankful the Lord has given you the liberty I have been waiting for.

"As to your ordination, it shall be just as you find your own heart disposed. You know I am only the Lord's poor servant for you all; and as he has given me a maternal heart for you, so the tenderness for all your usefulness, health, happiness, and, above all, increase of grace and knowledge in Christ Jesus, I can truly say is not only matter of my prayers and tears, but also of my greatest earthly happiness and joy. To have you not only to walk in the truth, but to become an eminent servant of that dear Lamb of God, this is my only portion and joy.

"The present state of the work is as follows:—Two new students are in the west; Mr. Glascott occasionally there. Nuben* and Aldridge in the Wiltshire work, the latter just removed to Dover. White is in London serving a very large congregation† I have been called to supply with the College services. Smith I have taken into connexion, and who is much alive; he and another student supply Woolwich, Dartford, and another place we are called to serve. Kent promises great things. Sussex is supplied by Mr. Peckwell, and two students you don't know, with other local helps. Ellis, Harris, and Crole, a new student, are serving a new work which promises to spread in the city of Lincoln and other parts of Lincolnshire. Poor, dear, and precious souls are walking miles to London, hearing I am there, to beg our help in different parts where the Gospel has never yet been preached. Wales is blossoming like a rose in all the English parts, as well great blessings on our Welsh labours. The chapel at Worcester, which is an exceedingly handsome one, is to be opened by Mr. Shirley, the 31st of this month. The long round in the various counties spreads in a most amazing manner. I keep to my old rule of going no where but from the call of the people first. The Lord knows only well how to employ us.

"I have as clearly and exactly informed you of the state of the work as possible, and the College has much of the power of God, and overflows at present with numbers. *Twenty-four* are there at present, and lively honest souls, with the greatest harmony and love that ever subsisted in such a place; and this, I trust, owing to their all having but one thing in view.

"My desire on your return for you would be the west, should you find freedom after a little stay to see how your brethren do at the College. There shall not be the loss of a day to inform you of the setting out of those students the Lord shall appoint in your room, as I shall now long to have you as soon as possible with us in England. Write to the person that has informed you of our calls into these counties,

* This gentleman's name is variously spelled. In the Annual Reports of Cheshunt College the name is *Newborn*, and in the life of Mr. Wills it is *Newburn*. He was for many years the minister of her Ladyship's chapel at Watchet, in Somersetshire, and died several years ago.

† Princess-street Chapel, near Moorfields, then occupied by the Rev. Thomas Maxfield.

and let him know that I hope to be enabled to send them a proper student for that purpose, and enquire well if they call upon the people's hearts for help. We are sure and safe when that is the case.

"I am treating about ground to build a very large chapel at Wapping, in London. Mr. Peckwell was in Sussex when the account came of my great temporal loss in America ; and out of great love came to speak a word of comfort, but that was not the Lord's meaning, though it was his ; and instead of three or four days for this purpose, he has been here nine weeks ; and I suppose by the multitudes he preached to in the fields, Tower-hill, the churches, &c., *that a hundred thousand people have heard the Gospel at least that never heard a word before.* He is amazingly popular, and much owned in the conversion and comforting of the people. I was rejoiced that the house had been burnt down, as this was the cause, the sole cause, of bringing him or me to London, where the fields are now every where white to the harvest.

"*Poor wicked Ireland, I trust shall yet have a Gospel day. I can't yet see how or when—but it must be ; and till I find that opportunity, my eye is only waiting darkly for its accomplishment.*

"Could I have thought my letters would have been of any comfort, I should have written, though having the whole transaction of this work *on my own hands*, I am prevented from following my heart in many things ; and I think my poor self such a hewer of wood and drawer of water, that I despair of being the least use or comfort to any. But my soul is in the dust, prostrate at the cross, hoping for all there ; and after my poor little vile labours of the day, I go to rest, having finished the day's work as well I can, and waiting for that voice each night that shall say—'Come up higher !' Thus I feel as void of care as a little child, knowing my dear Master cannot want me, and that his eye will be for a better, a more faithful and living servant, in my place, when my work is done. I am filled with shame when a weary day of trials makes my heart in secret feel it for a moment hard ; and often understand what my dear brother Paul meant when he said—'without was fightings and within was fears.'

"Make my Christian love most acceptable by your recommendation of it to our dear friends belonging to or in connexion with us ; and assure them my heart and eye are for them with the Lord. This grain of mustard seed shall become a great tree in time.

"Dear Hawkesworth, believe me ever what I have been, and must ever remain, your faithful and most affectionate friend,

"Trevecca, Oct. 13, 1773.

S. HUNTINGDON."

Mr. Hawkesworth continued in Ireland during the winter, and Lady Huntingdon sent him Mr. Jones, "who (she says) begs much not to be confined to one congregation. But while he spreads the Gospel elsewhere, let the people unite in prayer meetings. Preaching they may hear long, and yet be miserably ignorant ; whereas prayer meetings must bring them on in the examination of the heart."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Mr. Eccles returns from Georgia—Mr. Jones—Letter from Mrs. Paul—Lady Huntingdon's Relations—Bishop of Raphoe—Anecdote of Mr. Skelton—Letters from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Hawkesworth ordained—Mr. Adams—Mr. Kinsman—Letters to Mr. Hawkesworth—Mr. Mollar—Mr. Davies—Mr. Winkworth—Colonel Despard—Mr. White—Illness and death—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Opposition to Mr. Shirley—Remarkable Letters from Mr. Shirley to his Bishop—Anecdote of the Archbishop of Armagh—Mr. Hawkesworth visits Cork and Waterford—Mr. Osborn—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Wesley's Ministers—Magdalen Chapel—Mr. Shirley's Sermons give great offence—Letter from Mrs. Paul—the Dean of Cashel—Mr. Thompson—Mr. Coghlan—Several of the Bishops and Clergy attend Mr. Shirley's preaching—Letters from Mrs. Paul—Letters from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Hawkesworth joins the Moravians.

IN 1774 the Rev. Charles Stewart Eccles returned from Georgia, bringing letters from the students who went out in 1772. He remained some time with the Countess of Huntingdon, preaching at Mulberry-gardens and elsewhere, and then passed into Ireland. Whilst a student in the University of Dublin, the occasional preaching of Mr. Shirley excited his attention, and Mr. Eccles determined to hear and judge for himself. He accordingly went, and the ministry of Mr. Townsend, and the sermon preached by Mr. De Courcy on a tomb-stone in St. Andrew's church-yard, confirmed him in the great truths of the Gospel, and excited in his mind an ardent desire to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Whilst Mr. Hawkesworth was making excursions in the country, Mr. Eccles and Mr. Jones supplied the chapel in Dublin. Mr. Eccles also occasionally obtained admission into some of the churches, through the interest of his relation, Dr. Newcomb, then Bishop of Dromore, afterwards Primate of Ireland, who at the same time strongly censured his doctrine and manner of preaching. He was an extremely popular preacher, for his was the eloquence which steals silently into the heart and softly as flakes of falling snow. His subjects were well chosen, and he brought down the most sublime truths to the level of his hearers; for, though his language was chaste and correct, it was simple and lucid, peculiarly instructive to the young, the poor, and illiterate. Free from all that could be called cant, he might have been understood by those who never before heard the language of any religious party: while he preached the doctrines of the

Gospel so fully, that it was evident he loved them, and with such fervour, that it was manifest he deemed them essential to the eternal safety of his hearers. Amidst the opprobrium which he endured for his ardent and faithful testimony to the doctrines of the Gospel, he maintained a humbling sense of his own deficiencies, and this stamps the highest value on his personal religion. His influence was powerful among the higher classes, and many, who were unfriendly to the principles of evangelical truth, deemed themselves honoured by his friendship, which he ever considered a talent entrusted to him for the Redeemer's service. Vast numbers of the higher orders who were induced to hear him in the churches, afterwards followed him to Lady Huntingdon's chapels, where they brought others, to some of whom there is reason to believe the word which he proclaimed was made the power of God to their salvation:—

“Shortly after my last letter to your Ladyship (writes Mrs. Paul), I was at Straffen for a few days. There were many kind enquiries made after you, and much conversation about Mr. Eccles, Mr. Townsend, and the preachers sent over by your Ladyship. From what I was enabled to say much prejudice was removed, and Mr. and Mrs. Henry were induced to hear Mr. Eccles and Mr. Jones. Lady Mountcashel* accompanied them. Mrs. Henry was much pleased with Mr. Jones's manner of delivery, but there were many things to which she objected. Pharisaical pride is a great stumbling-block in her way,

* Lady Mountcashel and Mrs. Henry were daughters of Sir John Rawdon, Bart., afterwards Earl of Moira, by his first marriage with Lady Helena Perceval, daughter of John, first Earl of Egmont, and consequently near relations of Lady Huntingdon. Mrs., afterwards Lady Catherine Henry, was the wife of Joseph Henry, Esq., a banker of eminence and reputation in Dublin, by Anne, sister of Joseph, first Earl of Miltown. In 1772 Lady Catherine accidentally broke her leg while on a visit to her friend, Mrs. Vesey, the foundress of the Blue Stocking Club, and one of the early patronesses and correspondents of the late Mrs. Hannah More. During the many months she was confined by this afflicting event, her mind was led to reflect on the mercy of God and his great goodness to her through the various scenes of life. It was during this season of affliction that Lady Huntingdon first opened a correspondence with her, but no fragments of her letters or Lady Catherine's answers have been preserved. Lady Catherine died in October, 1780, leaving three daughters. She was the friend and correspondent of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, Mrs. Montague, and several literary characters of that period. Lady Helena married the Earl of Mountcashel, and was grandmother to the present Earl, and mother of the Countess of Kingston, sister-in-law of the present Viscount Lorton. The Earl of Moira, their father, was first cousin to Lady Huntingdon, and afterwards became her Ladyship's son-in-law, by his marriage with Lady Elizabeth Hastings in 1752.

Lady Helena Rawdon, their mother, died at the Hot Wells, Bristol, June 11, 1746. She was attended in her last illness by Lady Huntingdon, who was then at Clifton, with Lord Huntingdon, who died a few months after, and their daughters, Lady Elizabeth and Lady Selina, with his Lordship's excellent sisters, the Lady Anne Jacqueline and Lady Francis Hastings.

and closed her eyes to the reception of the truth as it is in Jesus. Yet, notwithstanding this, she seems most grateful for your Ladyship's letters and attentions under her late heavy affliction. I do hope she will yet be brought to the foot of the cross, and every relative of your Ladyship's brought home to the Shepherd and Bishop of souls. O that they may hourly and momentarily feel the rich and inestimable blessings purchased by the blood of our incarnate God! Lady Mountcashel is most kind and attentive; she does not start so many objections as Mrs. Henry, and is less disposed to argument and to find fault. My brother tells every body I have made Methodists of them. Lady Longford has been of benefit to them, and I trust has derived some good herself."

Mr. Eccles's popularity was supported by a commanding voice and intrepidity in avowing his sentiments, not by empirical pretences, or unfaithful accommodations to a depraved taste. He not only preached in all those places in connexion with Lady Huntingdon, but also occasionally in some of the Methodist chapels in the country, when he could not obtain access to the parish churches. When in the county of Tyrone, he offered to preach in Pintona church, near Ecclesville; but although his brother was proprietor of almost the whole parish, yet the rector, the Rev. Philip Skelton, would not suffer him to preach till he was convinced that he was not tinctured with Methodistical principles.*

Whilst Lady Huntingdon and the zealous men who laboured for her were actively engaged in devising fresh plans for illuminating multitudes in every part of this country, Mr. Shirley, Mr. Eccles, and Mr. Hawkesworth formed plans for the advancement of religion in the dark parts of Ireland, and meetings were established for supplication and prayer, for the propagation of the Gospel through every part of the Land.

The habitual display of the vital truths of the Gospel was attended with considerable success. Many were called to the faith of Christ, and exhibited superior purity in principle, sanctity of life, and patience in suffering. Many of the more pious

* Mr. Skelton was an extraordinary character in some respects. He invited Mr. Eccles to his house, and a week was spent in close examination of his principles: the result of which was, that he allowed him to preach in his pulpit whenever he pleased. The Rev. Mr. Burdy, in his life of Mr. Skelton, prefixed to his works, says, "Mr. Eccles told me that his brother had been to Georgia, where he was head of the College of Savannah. While he was there, he and another clergyman went among the Indians to convert them to Christianity; but their preaching was unhappily not successful. In one town particularly, the savages chased them away with stones; on which they shook the dust off their feet as a judgment against them. In a day or two after they heard that another body of Indians came upon them, destroyed the town, and put them all to death."

members of the congregation assembled frequently for the enjoyment of social worship, to strengthen each other's hands, to kindle each other's zeal to advance the cause of the Redeemer in their respective circles, and to extend the ordinances of religion to places where the Gospel was not preached. The work thus continuing to increase, Mr. Hawkesworth became more desirous of obtaining ordination as the resident minister of the congregation in her Ladyship's Connexion in Dublin, and in the month of March, 1774, wrote again for further help:—

“ Nothing (says her Ladyship) but the hourly expectation of seeing Mr. Eccles has prevented the first post being made the reply to your very comforting letter. Nothing can express the difficulties I feel for helpers from the amazing increase of the work every where. Ireland must feel this with me, as well as England, Wales, and America. I am going to the College, with the Lord's leave, and from thence shall send you the best help I can.”

Lady Huntingdon was then at Bath, from whence she went shortly after to Trevecca, and forwarded two students to Ireland. Early in the month of April Mr. Hawkesworth arrived in England, for the purpose of procuring ordination, and immediately proceeded to Exeter, where he remained only a short time, and from thence removed to Plymouth, to supply the Tabernacle pulpit for Mr. Kinsman; Lady Huntingdon having agreed to provide him with regular assistants, as the state of his health did not admit of his preaching three times on the Lord's-day. For many years the Tabernacles of Plymouth and Dock were supplied from Trevecca, and the preaching of her Ladyship's ministers there and in the immediate neighbourhood was attended with remarkable success. For some years before Mr. Kinsman's death, a succession of ministers from the metropolis and other parts of the kingdom regularly supplied the congregations, much upon the same plan with the London and Bristol Tabernacles.

Immediately on Mr. Hawkesworth's arrival at Plymouth he wrote to Lady Huntingdon relative to his ordination, and soon after received the following reply from her Ladyship:—

“ College, July 29, 1774.

“ Dear Hawkesworth,—I have received your letter; and I may say I have sought the Lord on your account, and am fully satisfied you judge right to be ordained for the Dublin congregation, as it will abide in connexion with me on the broad bottom plan. As Mr. Kinsman must remain with you, the sooner you return to the College the better; and you write to Adams,* or one in the west to take

* The Rev. John Adams, of Salisbury. The “ Memorial ” of him is short, but it has not “ perished with him,” for his record is on high. He has a place in the chronicles of the redeemed, a name before which that of heroes shall

Exeter, and the sooner the better. You will be just able to stay over the anniversary, and so embark from Bristol. I was not clear in the matter before yesterday, but I am now alive and happy about it; and shall be more united to Ireland, I find, than I have yet been. Write to dear Mr. Kinsman all kind thanks, and I will do the same. Say all that is most kind to dear Mrs. Kinsman,* and kindest remembrances to Mr. Heath.† Blessed be the Lord our God in the midst of us here. I have been ill. Pray for me, and believe me dear Hawkesworth, your ever affectionate friend,
 “S. HUNTINGDON.”

From a letter of Mrs. Paul to Lady Huntingdon, we learn that the work still continued very prosperous in Dublin; the chapel was well attended, persons of great respectability went privately to hear Mr. Jones, and the congregation looked forward with anxious expectation to the moment when Mr. Hawkesworth was to return to his beloved charge. Mr. Kinsman being in London supplying Mr. Whitefield's chapels, some delay necessarily took place in Mr. Hawkesworth's ordination. Lady Huntingdon wrote to Mr. Kinsman requesting his kind assistance in this affair, and received from him the most satisfactory and gratifying assurance of his compliance with her Ladyship's wishes. This intelligence she lost no time in communicating to Mr. Hawkesworth, who still continued at Plymouth during the absence of Mr. Kinsman:—

“Dear Hawkesworth,—I have just received a letter from Mr. Kinsman that assures me of his intention of ordaining you; and therefore think the first moment in your power you must get your call secured from Ireland. I have no creature in Ireland that I know but Mrs. Paul upon this occasion; and upon reflection I think her by no means a proper person for such an application, considering her near relation to the Church. I would, therefore, lose no time, leaving it wholly with you to obtain the call from those you yourself know. May the Lord Jesus abundantly bless you by this means and every other; and as it

dwindle into insignificance, and which it requires no “storied urn nor animated bust” to perpetuate. Mr. Adams had his education at Trevecca, and after itinerating some years under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, he was invited to become stationary at New Sarum, and succeeded in 1778 the Rev. Mr. Hoskins, afterwards of Castlegreen, Bristol.

* This excellent woman, whose maiden name was Anne Tiley, was a native of Plymouth, and, with many others, had been awakened under Mr. Whitefield's ministry, while he was detained there on his way to America. In 1745 she was united in marriage to Mr. Kinsman, and by him she had one daughter and three sons. The daughter and the eldest son survived their respected father, and were members of the religious community over which he presided. It is but justice to the memory of Mrs. Kinsman to say, that she was a great ornament to her Christian profession and a mother in Israel. The Lord was very gracious to her during her long illness; and indulged her with a very cheerful and happy frame in her last moments. She died in 1774, a very few weeks after the above letter from Lady Huntingdon was written.

† Rev. Robert Heath, afterwards minister of the Tabernacle at Rodborough.

will be confinement to your labours, I find no difficulties upon this matter. This ought to be done with all speed, as I conclude I shall see you before you go ; and if you embark from Bristol, and I should be at Bath, this will make it easy to us both. With the Lord's leave I am to be, October 22nd, at Chichester, for the opening of the chapel there ; and should the Lord (whose I am, and whom only I wish to follow) have no other call for me, I shall return to Bath in my way to my much, much beloved College, where I have found so much of that fire that is only kindled by the true fire from off the altar. Any money you want Mr. Kinsman will let you have. Indeed I do so much value your gracious spirit, that I can't help feeling my loss by so great a distance removing you ; but the Lord knows such are wanted in that part of his vineyard ; and if he does honour your labours in that kingdom of darkness, the little leaven may leaven the whole lump. I am, dear Hawkesworth, your ever faithful and ever affectionate friend,

"Bath, September 16, 1774.

S. HUNTINGDON."

Towards the close of September, Mr. Hawkesworth was ordained to the office of minister of Lady Huntingdon's Chapel in Dublin, at the Tabernacle in Plymouth, Mr. Kinsman, Mr. Heath, and other ministers assisting on that occasion. The ordination service was nearly the same as that practised among the Independent Dissenters. The congregation having been perfectly satisfied with the services of Mr. Hawkesworth, several of the members joined in giving him a solemn and express call to take upon him the pastoral inspection of them. The call of the congregation having been recognized, Mr. Hawkesworth's credentials and testimonials having been duly examined, and satisfaction as to his belief in the great doctrines of Christianity given to Mr. Kinsman and Mr. Heath, they solemnly consecrated him to the office, and recommended him to the grace and blessing of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Head of the Church, by fasting and prayer, accompanied with the imposition of hands. Soon after his ordination, Mr. Hawkesworth received the following very affectionate letter from his revered and noble patroness:—

"Dear Hawkesworth,—The hurry I have been in since I came from Sussex must excuse me to you. Opening a chapel in Chichester for the Lord, with the business that arises from the amazing increase of our work, allows little time to indulge myself, even in that of the more constant intercourse with my friends. I bless the Lord abundantly that you had so powerful a sense of the Lord's good will to you in your ordination. He has blessed you, and he will still bless you, as he will do every faithful soul with a single eye to his glory. Tell dear Mr. Kinsman how much obliged I feel myself to him and all concerned. As he is not well (and which grieves me to hear) you surely are right to stay ; and then I should be glad your first journey might be to London, as business must protract my stay ; and much must be

settled for Ireland. I have written no letter there waiting for consulting with you on those steps best to be taken on your arrival there. When Mr. Kinsman can spare you I think you should come, for this reason, as I must rely, under the Lord's wing, that you must be principal there, and have the care of that part of the work upon you. Pray for me as in the midst of *many* difficulties, and that the Lord may be glorified by all. In great haste, but ever the same, in all faithful and Christian affection, I remain, dear Hawkesworth, your devoted friend,
 "Nov. 2, 1774." "S. HUNTINGDON."

After some weeks spent at Plymouth, Mr. Hawkesworth repaired to London to meet Lady Huntingdon. From thence he was sent to Woolwich for a season, Mr. Piercy's chapel then being under her Ladyship's patronage during his absence in America: but how long Mr. Hawkesworth remained there we are not informed. Not long after his return to Dublin, he was united in marriage to Miss Mollar, sister of the late Andrew Mollar,* Esq., a worthy member of the Moravian Church, and a liberal benefactor of the human race. The ceremony was performed by Mr. Shirley. Mr. Hawkesworth's place at Woolwich was supplied by a Welsh gentleman of the name of Jones, afterwards minister of Lady Glenorchy's chapel in Edinburgh. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Jones was then serving in the Lincolnshire round, and was sent by Lady Huntingdon from Gainsborough to Ireland, in October, 1775, where he was much followed, and his ministry much owned.

Nothing remarkable occurred in the history of her Ladyship's Connexion in Ireland from this period till the summer of 1777, when Mr. Hawkesworth left Dublin to attend the meeting of the Welsh Association of ministers, which was held at Trevecca. The late Rev. William Winkworth, afterwards one of the chaplains of St. Savionr's, Southwark, and the Rev. Thomas Davies, were sent to Ireland by Lady Huntingdon to supply the congregation during the absence of Mr. Hawkesworth. Mr. Winkworth had his education at Trevecca, and after itinerating some years under the patronage of her Ladyship, took orders in the Established Church. In his preaching there was a simplicity of manner, a perspicuity of representation, and a familiarity of illustration calculated to make a strong impression on the minds of the people. He was a pains-taking man, and did all that human efforts could to render his discourses effectual for the salvation of those to whom he proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was also chaplain to the Surrey gaol,

* A son of Mr. Mollar's married a Miss Thomas; one of the Miss Mollars married Dr. William Beilby, a respectable physician in Edinburgh, and another her cousin, Mr. Hawkesworth.

where his labours were made effectual in the conversion of many hardened and profligate characters. In the year 1803 he attended the well-known Colonel Despard,* who was executed for high treason. The unhappy man was actuated by a spirit of infidelity to the very last, and when Mr. Winkworth kindly offered his services, he said, "I have fetters on my legs, do not endeavour to put fetters on my mind." Mr. Winkworth died at Reading, August 22, 1804; his remains were brought to London and interred in his own church.

After the meeting of the Association, Lady Huntingdon projected a scheme for the Rev. William White's going to Ireland with Mr. Hawkesworth, thinking the change of air might be of service to him. This zealous and devoted man had his education at her Ladyship's College, and had been labouring at South Petherton for some time, where he was instrumental in doing much good. When the students were called in from all parts to form the mission to America, he was chosen one of the students to go to Georgia, but was taken ill of the small-pox before he passed the Channel, and was landed at Dover. It pleased God to restore him from the borders of the grave, but the disease left such a bodily weakness, that he never completely recovered. Being unable to prosecute the voyage, he returned to the scene of his former labours. His stay there, however, was but short, for we find him in London in September, 1773, supplying Princess-street Chapel, near Moorfields, whilst the minister, the Rev. Thomas Maxfield, an episcopal ordained clergyman, was itinerating for Lady Huntingdon. From thence he went to Tunbridge Wells, Brighton, and other places in the Connexion. The last time he visited London was to supply at the Mulberry-gardens Chapel: there his ministry was very acceptable. The last sermon he preached in that place was from the 4th verse of the twenty-third Psalm, "Though I walked through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Growing weaker and unfit for preaching, Lady Huntingdon removed him to the College at Trevecca, where he spent the remainder of his days in continual expectation of his dissolution, frequently exhorting his brethren to be zealous and disinterested in the noble cause they had embarked in, expressing his confidence and assurance of salvation by Jesus Christ with much humility and gratitude. Having revived considerably, he was prevailed upon by her Ladyship to accompany Mr. Hawkesworth as far as Wem, in Shrop-

* A gentleman of high respectability and connexions in Ireland. His family have been long seated in the Queen's County, at Shanderry, Donore, and Larch Hill.

shire, where she had a chapel, and where he remained some weeks at the house of Samuel Henshaw, Esq., a truly pious and excellent man, who, with the late Sir Richard Hill, Messrs. Powis and Lee, and the Rev. Mr. Stillingfleet, was the means of diffusing much evangelical light in Shropshire. But Mr. White's weakness increasing rapidly, he could proceed no further, and with much difficulty returned to the College, where he languished till November following, and then died. Some months before his decease these words were much impressed upon his mind, and for some time followed him day and night—"Behold I die, but God shall be *here*"—which passage was applied by him concerning the College, the spiritual welfare of which he was particularly interested about, as he had been eight years a most diligent, faithful, and affectionate preacher in the labours of the Gospel in the Countess's Connexion, and was one for whom her Ladyship had a great esteem, both on account of his knowledge of divine matters and from his exemplary conduct during the many years he had been with her.

Between six and seven o'clock in the morning, when all the students were collected in the College Chapel in prayer for him, Mr. White secretly *slipped* out of the body, as he often used to call it, to be for ever with his Lord and Saviour, where sorrow and sighing for ever flee away. Many who had benefited by his conversation attended his funeral in Talgarth Church with a mixture of sorrow and joy. He lived beloved and died lamented. His funeral sermon was preached some weeks after in Talgarth Church, by the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, from Rev. xxi. 4.

Mr. Shirley spent a considerable part of the summer of this year in England, aiding Lady Huntingdon at Bath, Brighton, Oathall, and Norwich. At the latter place there were *eight hundred* in communion; "and I believe, (says her Ladyship,) there is nothing like it in the whole kingdom—their experience, lives, and conversation, so excellent." On his return to Ireland he was assailed on all sides by his clerical brethren, a set of men, many of whom were unencumbered by any conscientious scruples, and admired for that charming indifference to religion which will always fascinate a world at enmity with God. Such men could not look with a favourable eye upon the ardour of Mr. Shirley's zeal in the cause of religion, nor the novelty and boldness which he employed for its diffusion; and he was soon made to feel that he was obnoxious to his diocesan, who regarded him as a Methodist, and stigmatized him as a dangerous schismatic. His preaching was truly evangelical; he was a man of ability, knowledge, and wisdom, as well as zeal. To convert sinners was his business and his object, and he kept

it in view with singular steadiness and perseverance during the whole of that stormy period when he was called to exercise his ministry in Ireland.

It has been remarked, that revolutions in kingdoms frequently elicit talents, and draw forth an extent of capacity and energy of soul which external quiet would have allowed to remain inert and unknown. The sufferings of the Church of Christ display similar effects. The blood of the martyrs has always been the seed of the Church. By opposition from the rulers of the earth and the rigours of persecution, the most salutary influence on the minds of ministers has been produced. Threatened with the loss of every temporal enjoyment, they become disengaged from the world, and, feeling the perilous situation in which the cause of religion is placed, they make the most powerful efforts in its behalf. The mind rises above its common tone, and being called forth to extraordinary acts of service or suffering, acquires a strength of power, an acuteness and feeling above the common standard. This spiritual elevation and undaunted boldness in the cause of God and truth were frequently displayed in the character of Mr. Shirley, whose devotedness and zeal were often heightened by an opposition from his superiors, which harassed but did not crush the superior energy of his mind. The following spirited reply to his diocesan deserves publicity and preservation, and may supply an example to persons in similar circumstances.

Dr. Walter Cope, Bishop of Clonfert, writing to Mr. Shirley in June, 1778, among other things, which, being of a private nature, we omit, says :—

“ In case of your return to Loughrea, I fairly warn you to lay aside your exceptionable doctrines ; for, without entering into paper controversy, I must and will surely proceed in the most effectual manner to suppress all such.”

To which this champion for the truth replied as follows :—

“ My Lord,—After having written to your Lordship in the most respectful terms I could conceive, I was astonished at the unprovoked offensiveness of your Lordship’s answer. Menaces, my Lord, between gentlemen, are illiberal ; but when they cannot be put into execution they are contemptible ! In spiritual matters your Lordship acts as a judge ; but no judge is to treat a man as an offender till an accusation comes officially before him. When you are pleased to call my doctrines *exceptionable*, you ought to particularize *what* is exceptionable in them.

“ But, after all, does your Lordship know what my doctrines are ? That you may have the most authentic information I will give it myself. I maintain (not a partial, but) the total and absolute apostacy of man through the fall ; so that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his

own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God, and that works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasing to God, and without doubt they have the nature of sin. I preach justification by faith *only* in the merits, blood, and righteousness of Jesus Christ. I preach the equality of the Son and the Spirit with the Father in the Godhead, and that these are three Divine Persons, and but one God. I preach the doctrine of Regeneration or the New Birth: the sanctification, influence, inspiration, adoption, sealing, and testimony of the Spirit. I preach the full assurance of faith as the privilege of God's believing people, whereby they know that their sins are forgiven them for Christ's sake, and they are reconciled to the favour and love of God. I insist, moreover, that though we are justified by faith only, without our works or deservings, yet that every true believer will be careful to maintain good works; and that we are not to consider a man as possessed of saving faith who leads an ungodly life. *These, my Lord, are the doctrines which I must and will preach, in defiance of the whole world!* I can but smile at your Lordship's threatening to suppress my doctrines; and beg leave on this occasion to relate a matter of fact:—

“It is now about twenty years ago, Dr. Cumberland being Bishop of Clonfert, and Dr. John Ryder* Archbishop of Tuam, that his Lordship of Clonfert, the archdeacon, and my curate, went to Tuam to consult with his Grace how they might proceed against me; and the Archbishop, with much candour and good humour, was pleased to tell me afterwards what had passed. ‘Do you know,’ said he, ‘that your bishop, your archdeacon, and your own curate, having picked up some scrap of your sermons, came galloping over to me to know what they could do to you! And what do you think my advice was? Said I, ‘Let him alone; for if you bring him to a trial, he will appeal to the Articles and Homilies; and since the Articles and Homilies are as they are, you can do nothing to him: so let him alone!’†

“And now, my Lord, having the authority of the Church of England

* Son of Dudley Ryder, Esq., of Warwick, uncle of Sir Dudley Ryder, Bart., father of the first Lord Harrowby. It is gratifying to learn that many of the descendants of Archbishop Ryder have been the zealous supporters of evangelical principles and preaching in Ireland. One of his daughters married Dr. John Oliver, Archdeacon of Ardagh, father of the Dowager Vicountess Lifford, Admiral Oliver, who married a daughter of Lady Saxton, mentioned in a former part of this chapter, Major Oliver, &c.

† The excellent advice of the good Archbishop did not altogether check the tattling spirit of Mr. Shirley's clerical enemies, nor lessen the enmity which they felt towards him, and the solemn truths which he preached—truths, to the belief of which they themselves had subscribed. The curate was perpetually communicating some piece of intelligence which he thought might be pleasing to the Archbishop; but his Grace soon saw the motive of this gossiping man, whom he was secretly determined to reward as soon as a fit opportunity offered. On one occasion he went to Tuam on a mission of the utmost importance, as he conceived, confidently anticipating that the very serious accusation which he was about to prefer against Mr. Shirley would definitively ruin him in the eyes of his Grace. “O, your Grace!” cried the reverend gentleman, “I have such a circumstance to communicate! one that will astonish you!” “Indeed!” said his Grace, “what can it be?” “Why, my Lord,” replied the curate, at the same instant throwing into his countenance one of those extraordinary expres-

on my side, confirmed by the Word of God, be assured that, to my latest breath, I will bear a faithful testimony to the constitutional doctrines of our Establishment, and will expose the inconsistency, the iniquity, the religious juggling of those who solemnly subscribe articles of faith with their hands, from which they differ *fundamentally* in their hearts, and maintain diametrically opposite doctrines from their pulpits. I am, however, willing and desirous to be on a proper footing with your Lordship ; and whilst your deportment towards me is such as is due to a gentleman and a minister of Christ, you will never find me wanting in that respect to which your Lordship's station entitles you ; but I see no necessity for submitting to be trampled on by the first man in the kingdom.

" Hoping that your Lordship and I shall understand each other somewhat better for the future, I remain, my Lord, your Lordship's humble servant,

" WALTER SHIRLEY."

The summer of this year Mr. Hawkesworth again visited Waterford and Cork. At this latter place he found a scattered remnant, the fruit of Mr. Whitefield's labours, and a few who had withdrawn from Mr. Wesley's society. Here he remained some weeks, and sometime after his departure the congregation which he had been instrumental in raising, was supplied for a season by the late Rev. George Osborn.* This gentleman's family were amongst the fruits of Mr. Whitefield's ministry, and were united to this infant cause. Mr. Osborn, having imbibed dissenting principles, received his ministerial education at Daventry, and on his return to his native country commenced preaching. But those to whom his talents as a preacher would have been acceptable differed from his sentiments. The congregation, at that period, was composed chiefly of persons belonging to the Established Church, who preferred the use of the Liturgy, and the plan usually adopted in the chapels of

sions which seemed to imply that the Archbishop would be petrified by the communication, " He actually wears—*white stockings* !" " Very anti-clerical and very dreadful indeed," returned the Archbishop, apparently much surprised. The curate at this moment was evidently at the very pinnacle of self-congratulation. His Grace, with a peculiar earnestness in his manner, and in a sort of confidential half-whisper, drawing at the same time his chair closer to the curate, enquired, " *Does Mr. Shirley wear them over his boots ?*" It would be difficult to conceive the situation of the poor unhappy curate at this most unexpected question ; almost panting for breath and in the most mortified tone, he muttered out, " No, your Grace." The Archbishop rose from his seat with much dignity, and placing his hand in a familiar manner on the shoulder of his reverend auditor, replied, " Well, Sir, the first time you find Mr. Shirley *with his stockings over his boots* pray inform me, and I shall deal accordingly with him."

* This gentleman was afterwards settled at Kidderminster for a short time, and for twenty-one years was pastor of the Dissenting church in Angel-street, Worcester. He died in November, 1812.

Lady Huntingdon. From some cause this congregation was but irregularly supplied by the ministers in her Ladyship's Connexion; and after the lapse of some years they were regularly organized as an Independent church. Several excellent men have been the pastors of this church; and the labours of Mr. Fleming and Mr. Burnet (now of Camberwell) will be long remembered in Cork and its vicinity. Mr. Hawkesworth visited several other places, and on his return to Dublin was seized with a dangerous illness, from which, however, he soon recovered, to the unspeakable joy of his numerous friends. Lady Huntingdon was at this period at Bala, in Wales, and feeling much alarmed at Mr. Shirley's report of Mr. Hawkesworth's illness, wrote to him as follows:—

“ My most faithfully esteemed friend,—I hope you have not thought my delay in writing has had the appearance of less regard for you. Oh! no: the same sense of your faithfulness in the Lord's work remains an unalterable cause of that esteem and regard ever due to you. Dear Mr. Shirley's account of your illness has made me so uneasy to hear that you are recovered, that I could no longer forbear this enquiry, begging a line to hear how you do. The best revival for your spirits is that which can bring from your heart most praise to the Lord; and I will assure you much cause there is for that, for of the *increase* of his government there seems no end! Each week, each day, brings new cries—‘ O! come and help us!’—and that with an earnestness that is as the children's cry for bread in their father's house. I have striven all in my power to commit all into faithful hands, believing their better care would bring more glory to God. But, alas! none will take it—the burden and the heat of the day must still continue my lot; and while able to sustain it, I am willing, living and dying, to yield myself, the poor unprofitable servant, into his hands, who wants not any profitableness to bless my soul and all that belongs to him.

“ Your poor little College still goes on well; and the gift of awakening seems much continued to our plan and work. The spread is astonishing! The College does not yet fill equal to our calls: but the fewer, the more useful. They appear like Gideon's army—only those that had the right lap were to have the victory; and the thousands of others had neither part nor lot in the spoils. Faith, true divine faith, is at a low ebb. I often think myself a very Herod, in a gorgeous robe of profession, such a poor wretched creature do I seem to myself, not worthy or fit to be called by that holy name—CHRISTIAN. If faith had such victories, surely, when I have it, it will make all things possible—the conversion of the world: for it subdues kingdoms to God. These fruits from the faith of a saved soul ought to follow; but we suffer our expectations from the Lord to be cut off, supposing he has not such blessings and work for his people as formerly: and then the devil makes such fools of us, and lets us be pleased and so satisfied with ourselves, lest we should do him more mischief: and if

the Lord was to come now into his professing Church, He, the Son of Man, would not find one bit of that faith that God honoured by his report of it; and without 'this faith it is *impossible* to please him.' He likes nothing in all his creatures but the trust they place in him. Dear Enoch! how I long for his faith. I see no glory given to God but by thee alone. O! evermore give me this faith, then hell, death, and the devil do your worst, for an eternal victory is gained.

"I long to hear from you, and more about dear Mr. Shirley's success in the churches. Love to Mrs. Paul, or any that ask after me or wish well to Zion. When you pray for me, ask for that faith that pleases God: I will ask it for you. And believe me, as ever, your truly faithful, sincere, and devoted friend,

"S. HUNTINGDON."

The labours of several ministers in Mr. Wesley's Connexion, particularly Messrs. Houghton,* Coughlan, and Thompson, were eminently successful in reviving a spirit of true Christianity in Dublin and other parts of Ireland. At one time Mr. Shirley and Mr. Houghton preached morning and evening for a succession of Sundays to very crowded and attentive congregations. The noise attending their ministrations, and the multitudes that followed them, soon awakened the enmity of those that hated the light. Mr. Shirley in all his public ministrations insisted chiefly on the great and important doctrine of the sinner's justification by faith without works; in which the righteousness of God is manifest through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ. The subject he treated in a tone so decisive and truly evangelical, as to excite the wrath of his superiors in the Church, with all the horde of dignified or diminutive oppugners of the grace of God in truth: but their envenomed arrows fell impotent on his shield of faith; *imbelle telum sine ictu*.

The chapel of the Magdalen Asylum, founded by Lady Arabella Denny, was supplied with the most popular preachers of the metropolis, and was frequented by persons of the highest rank in society. Through the interest of young Lady Granard, the grand-daughter of Lady Huntingdon, and just then married, Mr. Shirley was invited to preach a few times in the chapel of this institution.

"Your Ladyship (writes Mrs. Paul) cannot imagine what an uproar has been created by dear Mr. Shirley's preaching at the Magdalen. Lady Granard was spoken to, and as it was her first request since her

* Mr. Houghton was one of the preachers against whom the grand jury of Cork made that memorable presentment, in 1750. He afterwards quitted the Methodist Connexion, and, procuring episcopal ordination, settled in the parish of Kilrea, in the county of Londonderry, where he ended the days of his pilgrimage in peace, having been many years a respectable minister and a useful justice of the peace. He occasionally visited the metropolis, and having obtained admission to some of the churches, proclaimed the Gospel of the grace of God with great boldness and fidelity.

marriage, Lady Arabella would not refuse her ; so Mr. Shirley got the use of the pulpit three times. But O ! what sermons he preached ! The doctrine of the sinner's justification by faith without works, the sin and danger of neglecting the salvation of the Gospel, and the great duty of repentance were enforced with an eloquence and zeal which cannot but mortify the pride and goad the enmity of those who have never tasted the grace of God in truth. This he is made to feel by rudeness and insult ; and he is now constantly exposed to the inconsistent charges of maintaining licentious doctrine and over-righteous severity. But such honour have all his saints. It is even reported that our Archbishop intends some proceedings against Mr. Shirley. This is disputed by my brother, Sir William Hawkins, who insists upon it that Mr. Shirley has only given the real sense of the articles and doctrines of the Reformers, and that whoever preaches or believes these leading truths of the Gospel will be immediately branded as a Methodist or Calvinist. The dean has actually invited Mr. Shirley to dinner, but my brother, the Bishop, refuses to meet him. Still I have a hope that he will not act in a manner so unchristian. There is to be a grand discussion and examination of the doctrines he preaches. Some good, I trust, will come of it ; and I pray heartily to the Lord to enable Mr. Shirley to be bold, resolute, and uncompromising. The object I know is not to ascertain truth, but to obtain some loop-hole by which to entrap him. May these unholy desires be overruled for good to all. Numerous charges are brought against him, as your Ladyship may readily conceive, from your long experience in the ways of God and the many instances you have had of the unreasonable opposition of a gainsaying world. But what has been termed his "over-righteous severity," and the contempt which he has poured on the grovelling morality of rational and pharisaical religion, has been the most offensive, as testifying of the world that its deeds are evil, and its professional religion but name and form. I have heard Mr. Shirley twice since, in St. Mary's Church, when he nobly vindicated the doctrines which he preached at the Magdalen from the charge of licentiousness, the cry of the ignorant, unawakened, and self-righteous, from the Apostles' day unto the present.

Mr. Coughlan and Mr. Thompson were eminently useful—the great Head of the Church bore testimony to the word of his servants, and wherever they preached, "signs and wonders were wrought in the name of the holy Jesus." Their labours were intense, and they had frequently to contend with the "outcasts of men." But they cheerfully sacrificed ease, honour, and worldly gain : and, with the Apostle, "counted not their own lives dear unto themselves, so that they might but finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they had received."*

* At one time, while Mr. Thompson was preaching, an unruly mob arose (instigated by the minister of the parish) and cruelly assaulted him and several of his friends, whom they carried off in triumph, and placed on board a transport, which then lay ready to sail with a fleet of men-of-war. Mr. Thompson

The summer of 1780 Mr. Shirley spent in England, supplying the chapels of the Countess; and on his return to Ireland preached several times in Dublin on his way to his living in the county of Galway. On this visit Mr. Shirley's ministry was attended by the Archbishop of Dublin,* the Dean of Christ Church,† the Dean of St. Patrick's,‡ and the Dean of Kildare,|| the Bishops of Limerick,§ Ossory,¶ and Derry,** the Dean of Clonmacnois,†† and other ecclesiastics. It was strongly suspected that the motive which induced them to hear one so stigmatized, was in order to conjure up some accusation against him, by which they might silence his preaching.

“The Dean (says Mrs. Paul,) though as great an enemy as other^s

was confined in prison, expecting every hour to be transported also, and he was not permitted to see any of his friends. The parson and the noble justice of the peace sometimes deigned to visit him, in order to dispute with him on religious subjects.

This outrage, committed against all law and order, coming to the ears of Lady Huntingdon, her Ladyship, with some others of considerable respectability, made application to Government; by which means Mr. Thompson and the people were soon set at liberty. An action was brought against the *worthy* clergyman, who had nearly paid dear for his zeal; for had not Mr. Thompson himself used his utmost endeavours to stay the process, it would probably have proved the ruin of him and his family.

Mr. Thompson was a man of remarkably strong sense, a fertile genius, a clear understanding, a quick discernment, a retentive memory, and a sound judgment. His mind, naturally endowed with strong parts, was greatly improved by reading and close thinking; so that as a minister he was a “workman who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” He was supposed by many to be one of the closest reasoners and most able speakers that ever sat in the Methodist Conference. After the death of Mr. Wesley he took a very active part in the affairs of the Connexion; and the outlines of the present form of government originated principally with him. The Conference showed in what light they viewed him by choosing him for their *first* president after the decease of the venerable founder of Methodism.

* Dr. Robert Fowler, father of the late Countess of Kilkenny and the present Bishop of Ossory.

† Dr. Charles Jackson, Lord Bishop of Kildare.

‡ Dr. William Craddock, brother of Dr. John Craddock, formerly Archbishop of Dublin, and uncle to the present Lord Howden.

|| Dr. Robert King.

§ Rev. William Gore, eldest son of the Dean of Down. He was successively Bishop of Clonfert, Elphin and Limerick, where he died, February 25, 1784. His first wife was eldest daughter of Colonel Chidley Coote, of Coote Hall, in the county of Roscommon, and his second wife a daughter of William French, of Oak Park, in the same county, and sister to the Countess of Miltown. Some of the descendants of Bishop Gore have been amongst the friends of evangelical religion in Ireland.

¶ Sir John Hotham, Bart., cousin-german to Lady Gertrude Hotham, so frequently mentioned in this work.

** Afterwards Earl of Bristol, brother of the excellent Lady Mary Fitzgerald. For some particulars of this nobleman's conduct see memoirs of the celebrated Lady Hamilton.

†† Rev. Arthur Champagne, son of Major Josias Champagne and Lady Jane Forbes, daughter of the second Earl of Granard. Dean Champagne was father of the Countess of Uxbridge, Lady Desvœux, and Lady Borrowes.

to Gospel truth, yet, out of a pure spirit of opposition, will not join the party now sitting in judgment on dear Mr. Shirley. I cannot make out what they intend to do ; every thing is carried on with great secrecy, and he is still permitted to preach. We must leave the result of such deliberations in the hands of Him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will. He will overrule their impotent attempts to retard the proclamation of his Gospel—his message of mercy to the sons and daughters of sin and iniquity. O, pray that He may make bare his arm in our defence, and that the word of our God may run and be glorified amongst us."

But the truth of the matter was that Methodism and Calvinism, and words of like undefined meaning, which were applied so unsparingly to Mr. Shirley, and all who preached the great doctrines contained in the Articles, Homilies, and Formularies of our Church, were only the tubs thrown out to amuse the whale. The real ground of contest was the nature and necessity of vital godliness—whether the Holy Ghost was yet given in his divine influences, restoring us to a life of communion with God, through the blood of the Lamb. The controversy about doctrines, among spiritually-minded men, has of late lost many of the angles of asperity. Every one who loves our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, will neither refuse the hand of fellowship nor the heart of affection to those of whom he has confidence that they have received the grace of God in truth, and drank into one spirit. But the real sense of the articles and doctrines of the Reformers is an important point to be ascertained by all who call themselves Churchmen, and subscribe their assent and consent. They are not the doctrines of Calvin or Arminius, as copied servilely from one master ; no, nor from the Helvetic confession ; but drawn pure from the sacred fountains themselves, by men as excellent and learned in the Scriptures as any of the foreign divines, Lutherans, Calvinists, or Zuinglians. In the great lines of truth they coincided : and the doctrines of original sin, of free will, of justification by faith, and of good works, were equally maintained by Luther and Melancthon, by Zuinglius and Œcolampadius, by Calvin and Beza, by Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, by Jewel, Sands, and other Reformers : every man knows that, without entering into the details, expressed with whatever moderation, whoever insists on these leading truths of the Gospel, according to the statement of any one of the persons mentioned, he will be immediately branded as a Methodist or Calvinist.

Mr. Shirley had been on a visit to his brother, the Hon. Captain Shirley, deputy ranger of St. James's and Hyde Parks, after he had been supplying the chapels of the Countess, and

on his return to Ireland remained some time in Dublin, having some affairs relative to her Ladyship's chapel to arrange.

A student of the Countess, afterwards the Rev. Edward Burn, minister of St. Mary's, Birmingham, was a native of Ireland, and was now sent to relieve Mr. Hawkesworth, whose mind began to waver as to his longer continuance in Ireland. From the period of his first admission at Trevecca he became a remarkable favourite with Lady Huntingdon, who esteemed him very highly for his work's sake, his many estimable qualities, his unflinching integrity, and eminent devotedness to the cause of God. From the tenor of her Ladyship's correspondence with him, it is very obvious that she was at all times extremely anxious to see him usefully settled in England, but did not see that Providence called him to quit a post of such importance. His abilities and zeal suited the station in which he was placed—nowhere could he hope to be more usefully employed—a divine unction was upon his own soul and on his ministrations; but, above all, his removal would have left a vacancy, which there was no hope to supply alike to the good of man and the glory of God. In the following letter we find her Ladyship's sentiments on this head fully detailed: though anxious for his removal, she still “thought the Lord had not yet given him a discharge from the pastoral charge of the people in Dublin.” The letter, which is highly important, is dated College, October 21, 1781:—

“My highly esteemed Friend,—Not having heard from you so long, and my bad health, with multiplied business, and daily increasing trials, filling my time with cares and my heart with fears, grief, &c., I wanted opportunity to write so fully as my wishes even dispose me to you. However, through all opposition the devil or wicked men can make here, I yet am a poor worm, ready to be crushed every moment, yet reviving afresh to fight the Lord's battles, and standing with heed to glory in tribulation: and under all such wonderful displays of the Lord's power, and the increasing blessing upon the work, that I often say my ingratitude is so base that a single murmur for anything I suffer might justly bring a blast upon the work; so glorious does our dear and faithful High-priest show himself out of Zion in such perfect beauty. Thousands are added to the Churches of England and Wales continually. O that the Lord could make your way clear to come among us. So tried have I been by the various disappointments of those, from time to time, I have wished to have found faithful to serve for you, that I have even fainted in my spirit; and I think till I know they are in the ship, and hardly then, shall my evil heart believe but I shall still meet the cross.

“The College is full, and yet such amazing calls they are dragged out by the people, that we live ever in want. I do beg a line to let

me know the light you have upon your continuance, or your wishes to be removed. I have thought that the Lord had not yet given your discharge to these people, and that the trials I have met with on this account were to reprove my selfish wants of you in various parts of the work. And, alas! when I see you standing alone through every difficulty, I think this is the heart of faithfulness to the people, and the day of trial may be at hand, when these poor souls might be tossed and not comforted, unless so supported; and I see nothing for myself or others, but bearing and enduring all things for Christ and his elect's sake, that is worth living for or doing upon earth—all is alike misery, and just so far as the eye is kept single, and the heart faithful, to behold that Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and that *even poor* I, shall not be plucked out of his hands. Come life, come death, come devils, men, or all their hosts of infernal legions, yet the last moments will be so sweet as to make good amends for all my sorrows, and hell groan for its hopeless prospect of one of its deserved companions. But let us take courage, my excellent friend, almighty strength is ours, it is all engaged to defeat the devil's purposes; and that one thought makes me face all dangers, as sure to make a fool as well as a devil of him in the end. I think I see him bruised under my feet, begging hard for life, but I have found him a father of lies, and the Lord shall give him his death's blow, and my soul triumph in the Lord strength.

"Farewell, my worthy friend. Let me soon hear from you. Your name is loved and honoured in this College to this day; but of none more than your ever faithful and truly devoted friend,

"S. HUNTINGDON."

Mr. Hawkesworth's marriage with Miss Mollar, sister of the late Andrew Mollar, Esq., a worthy member of the Moravian Church, brought Mr. Hawkesworth in close connexion with the United Brethren; and about the beginning of the year 1782 he withdrew from the Connexion of his kind and noble patroness, and joined the Moravian Church. This change greatly distressed the venerable Countess, who foresaw in this circumstance the departure of his ministerial usefulness. Her Ladyship deeply felt this trial, and made several ineffectual efforts to induce him to retrace the steps he had taken. On his return to England he settled at Wem, in Shropshire, where he had formerly laboured in the chapel built by Mr. Henshaw, and supplied for many years by the students from Trevecca. After some time he removed to Fulneck, in Yorkshire, and from thence to London. Whilst there he withdrew from the Church of the United Brethren, and retired to Horsley, in Gloucestershire, where he ended his days in peace, in the year 1810.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Mr. Edward Smyth—Mr. William Smyth—Remarkable Conversion of Mrs. Smyth—Romaine and Garrick—Persecution of Mr. Smyth—Mr. Smyth's Family—Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher—Lady Mary Fitzgerald—Dr. Peckwell visits Dublin—Letter from Dr. Peckwell—Magdalen Chapel—Lady Moira and Lady Arabella Denny—Letter from Lady Moira—Mr. Skelton—Mr. Stephens—Death of Dr. Peckwell—Account of his Family—Mr. Shirley supplies Lady Huntingdon's Chapel—Death of Mr. Shirley—Hymns written by him—Mr. Boddeley—Bethesda Chapel—Mr. Timothy Priestly—Anecdote of Miss Ford—Sir William Hamilton—Mr. Wesley visits Dublin—Evangelical Society—Mr. Rowland Hill and other Ministers visit Ireland—Mr. Wildbore—Mr. Ball—Mr. Garie—Chapel at Sligo—Persecution—Dr. Povah.

It was now that the Rev. Edward Smyth* commenced his ministry in Dublin, as curate of one of the city churches. The Lord, who is rich in mercy, early began to thwart Mr. Smyth's worldly prospects and scenes of happiness, by the sudden and unexpected death of his uncle, the Archbishop of Dublin, in 1772, without considering him in his will, at a time when he had intended to have given him the first living that dropped. This sudden change of his worldly prospects caused Mr. Smyth to look out for a curacy: one presented itself, which seemed very advantageously situated, being on the estate of a near relation, of very considerable fortune, who made him very kind offers, if he would accept of it, telling him, at the same time, he would procure him the chaplaincies of the different regiments that should be quartered there. But God, who

“—— moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform,”

frustrated this intention, by a clergyman offering to resign his curacy in Dublin to Mr. Smyth, which Mrs. Higginson's fond affection for her daughter, Mrs. Smyth, prompted him to accept, as his mother-in-law feared if they removed to a greater dis-

* He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he took his A. B. degree. His father was Archdeacon of Glendalough, being a younger brother of Dr. Thomas Smyth, Bishop of Limerick, by a daughter of Dr. Ulysses Burgh, Bishop of Ardagh, to which most ancient see he was appointed (by William and Mary), in 1692, in which year he died, when the see was united to that of Dromore. Mr. Smyth was cousin of the then Bishop of Down and Connor, and nephew to Dr. Arthur Smyth, Archbishop of Dublin, who died in 1772, to whose memory a magnificent monument, executed by Van Nort, was erected in St. Patrick's Cathedral, with a beautiful inscription from the pen of his intimate friend, Dr. Lowth, Bishop of Lincoln.

tance she might never see them more. Mr. Smyth had reason to bless God for his removal to Dublin; for at the house of his eldest brother, William Smyth, Esq., he first met many excellent Christian people, usually stigmatized as Methodists, and frequently had opportunities of meeting and hearing the ministers in Lady Huntingdon's and Mr. Wesley's Connexions. At first he thought it very strange and unlawful that they should preach without being sent according to the form of the Church of England; and very much disapproved of some parts of their doctrine. His prejudices, however, gradually subsided; he had frequent conversations with Mr. Shirley and Mr. Hawkesworth, his mind became deeply impressed with a sense of divine truth, and he soon broke through every trammel and boldly proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation.

The brother of Mr. Smyth was very conspicuous at this time, from the prominent part which he took in all that concerned the advancement of divine truth. He was a man of fortune, and his residence was the resort of people of every name and denomination who loved the Lord. He was the friend of all good men, and the liberal supporter of every scheme for the diffusion of that name which he loved and honoured. Frequent mention of him occurs in the correspondence of Lady Huntingdon and Mrs. Paul.

Events of the last importance arise from causes apparently insignificant. The links of the chain of providence are wonderfully connected: an infidel ridicules—a believer admires and adores. The circumstances connected with the conversion of Mr. and Mrs. William Smyth, and the unspeakable benefits which resulted from it, not only to many of their own immediate family, *but to hundreds besides*, are of a nature so singular, and so calculated to bring glory to the God of all grace, that we cannot omit the mention of them in this place. Shortly after the marriage of Mr. Smyth, it was announced in the public papers that Mr. Garrick was to take a final leave of the stage in the month of June, 1776.* Mrs. Smyth, who was a passionate admirer of theatrical representations, expressed an ardent desire to witness the last acting of this celebrated man. Mr. Smyth said much to divert her attention from this point, but in vain. As it was inconvenient to leave Ireland at that time, Mr. Smyth requested

* The late Mrs. Hannah More was in London at this period, and had been introduced to the notice of Mr. Garrick, whose curiosity was great to see and converse with her. His career was drawing to a close, which inflamed her eager desire to hear Shakspeare speaking in the person of that consummate actor. It was afterwards Mr. Garrick's delight to introduce Miss More to the best and most gifted of his acquaintance.

his brother, Colonel Smyth, to accompany his lady to London. On their arrival they made immediate application for places, but none could be obtained. What then was to be done? Colonel Smyth recollected a former intimacy with the Duchess of Leeds: her Grace was all condescension, and readily invited Mrs. Smyth to accompany her to the theatre. Every wish was now on the eve of being gratified; Garrick took his leave of the stage, and Mrs. Smyth became the guest of the Duchess of Leeds during the remainder of her stay in London.

Mr. Romaine was at this period in the zenith of his popularity: through the interest and persevering conduct of the late John Thornton, Esq., he had been elected and finally inducted to the living of St. Anne's, Blackfriars. Here his ministry was attended by amazing multitudes, and if we were desired to write a panegyric on the memory of that venerable man, we would studiously collect a complete register of the ministers and people converted by his preaching, now living or gone to their eternal rest. The names and anecdotes attending them would fill volumes, and perhaps not unprofitably.

Hearing of the immense crowds that attended his ministry, and the astonishing effects produced by his preaching, Mrs. Smyth expressed a strong desire to hear a man so singular and so renowned. The fashionable circle by whom she was surrounded were unanimous in their reprobation of the man and the doctrines he promulgated. In vain it was urged that he was a Methodist—an enthusiast—one whom it was improper for her to hear—and that to procure admittance to a place so crowded was utterly impracticable. Mrs. Smyth had been gratified in seeing Mr. Garrick, and in mingling with the immense crowd that witnessed his last acting. The more Mr. Romaine was reprobated, and the greater the difficulty of obtaining admission to the church, the more urgent was Mrs. Smyth to hear him: nothing could deter her, and go she would, in defiance of every remonstrance. Mr. Romaine preached from that remarkable passage in the 90th Psalm—"Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath." There the Lord met Mrs. Smyth with the blessings of his grace; and she was led to a happy acquaintance with the great deep of corruption in a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Mr. Smyth's state of mind was little short of derangement. With the utmost anxiety he hastened to London: Mrs. Smyth explained the change that had taken place in her principles and feelings, and the abandonment of all her former notions of religion. Mr. Smyth was overwhelmed with surprise, but agreed to accompany her to hear Mr. Romaine, and judge

for himself ; and he too was constrained, as a poor sinner, to take refuge at the foot of the cross ! From that time the happy change commenced, for which hundreds have since had reason to bless God. Mr. Smyth has long since entered into the joy of his Lord. There, among the spirits of just men made perfect, he has joined many of those who have been awakened by his instrumentality, and they will rejoice together with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Persecuted in the Church for the zealous execution of a painful duty,* he joined the Wesleyans, and in the course of his itinerant excursions he visited Limerick, where most of his relations resided. The chapel was crowded to excess ; and he sometimes preached in the open air to great multitudes. It was soon after this period that one of his nieces, Miss Ingram, daughter of the Rev. Jaques Ingram,† chancellor of the cathedral, joined the Methodist Society in Limerick. She afterwards married John Morton, Esq., whom she accompanied to India. Their eldest daughter, called at Madras under the ministry of Mr. Loveless, became the first wife of the late Rev. Dr. Morison, missionary in China, and died at Canton,

* After labouring a short time in Dublin, the Rev. Edward Smyth was presented with a curacy in the country, by Lord Bangor, which was so agreeably circumstanced that all his friends advised him to accept it. Their residence not being in proper repair, his lordship invited Mr. and Mrs. Smyth to spend some time at Castle Ward, till their home was ready to receive them. Mr. Smyth's stay in this part of the vineyard was but of short duration. Lord Bangor living in open adultery, Mr. Smyth thought it his bounden duty to admonish him, in the most affectionate and respectful manner, not to approach the sacramental table whilst continuing in such a flagrant violation of the law of God. His lordship, regardless of all expostulation and propriety, persisted in his intention, and Mr. Smyth was reluctantly forced to perform a painful duty, imposed upon him by the Canons of the Church. This exposed him to the enmity and opposition of his lordship. A petition was sent to the Bishop of the diocese, Dr. Trail, who summoned Mr. Smyth to a trial, when he was enabled, before the rulers of this world, to give a public testimony of the truth, proving that the doctrine he taught was agreeable to that of the Church of England, and to the oracles of God : and though nothing was found whereby they could give sentence against him as guilty, yet, through an illegal stretch of power, the Bishop was induced to deprive him of his cure.

† One of the sisters of Mr. Ingram married the Rev. Deane Hoare, a gentleman of great benevolence and philanthropy, under whose superintendence the cathedral of Limerick was much improved and beautified. His eldest son, the late Rev. John Hoare, rector of Rathkeale, chancellor of St. Mary's, and vicar-general of the diocese of Limerick, was a sound evangelical preacher, and a useful minister of the Gospel. There is an excellent memoir of him in the "Evangelical Magazine." One of his sons is a popular evangelical preacher at present, in Limerick. Mrs. Hoare was a daughter of Sir Edward Newnham, Bart., and sister to Mrs. Walter Shirley.

The Rev. William Hoare, second son of the Rev. Deane Hoare, was likewise an evangelical clergyman. There is mention made of him in the memoirs of his brother. He was minister of St. George's, and Vicar-general of the diocese of Limerick. He married Miss Guinness, one of the sisters of Arthur Guinness, Esq., of Beaumont, in the county of Dublin.

June 10, 1821, leaving behind her a son and a daughter to feel the loss of one of the best of mothers.*

Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, of Madely, had been earnestly requested by several serious persons at Dublin to come over and spend a few weeks in that city, for the purpose of promoting the interests of religion by their exhortations and example. As long as civility or piety would suffer them to resist the earnest solicitations of these friends of the everlasting gospel, they declined the journey; but after being repeatedly urged to undertake it, at the united instances of the Methodist Society, they judged it improper any longer to withhold that consent, lest, in disregarding the solicitations of a willing people, they should disobey the summons of God. Accordingly, in the summer of 1783, they accepted the invitation, and appeared for a season in another kingdom, as two burning and shining lights. During their continuance in the Irish metropolis, Mr. Fletcher's public and private exhortations were attended with a remarkable blessing. Numbers of careless persons were awakened to a sense of the importance of divine things, and the general tone of religion was evidently raised amongst the more serious characters with whom he conversed.

While in Dublin, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher were entertained

* The Rev. Edward Smyth was twice married. His second wife, Miss Dawson, was sister to the lady of the Rev. Dr. Murray, the present worthy Dean of Ardagh. Mr. Smyth possessed considerable political abilities, and published a poem, entitled "The Fall and Recovery of Man," "Devout Meditations," &c. &c.

One of Mr. Smyth's sisters married Benjamin Lee, Esq., of Merrion, near Dublin, and left three daughters, Anne, Jane, and Rebecca. Jane, the second daughter, married the Rev. Thomas Roberts, A.M., a respectable minister in Mr. Wesley's connexion. Mr. Randolph Roberts, a son by a former marriage, became the husband of Miss Sarah Morton, daughter of the late John Morton, Esq., and sister to Mrs. Morrison of China. The eldest and youngest daughters of Mr. Lee married two brothers, Arthur and Benjamin Guinness, Esqrs., men of large fortunes, and eminently devoted to all that is excellent and of good report. For a long series of years they have been stated hearers in the chapel erected by their uncle, William Smyth, Esq., and most liberal supporters of the Gospel in every denomination. Mrs. Arthur and Mrs. Benjamin Guinness were women of great piety and singular excellence. They both quitted this world with a hope blooming and full of immortality. In the south gallery of St. Werburgh's Church are two handsome monuments to their memory. The eldest brother, Dr. Hosea Guinness, was rector of St. Werburgh's. The eldest son of Mr. Arthur Guinness, the Rev. William Smyth Guinness, is an evangelical clergyman, the rector of an extensive parish. He married his cousin, Susan Jane, only daughter of his uncle, Benjamin Guinness, Esq.

One of Mr. Smyth's uncles was a Baron of the Exchequer, another married a sister of Viscount Pery, and another, Charles Smyth, Esq., represented the city of Limerick in Parliament for forty-five years. He married the sister and heir of Sir Thomas Prendergast, Bart., and was father of the late Lord Kiltavon, and grandfather of Charles Vereker, the present Viscount Gort.

chiefly at the house of William Smyth, Esq.* Under the hospitable roof of this excellent man Mr. Fletcher met many truly pious persons of other denominations, whom he saluted as the children of God, and honoured as heirs of an eternal inheritance. Sincere worshippers, of every denomination, he regarded as "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," desiring no greater honour than to be counted as their brother, and commanded as their servant. With Mr. Shirley, many years the companion of his choice, he took sweet and solemn counsel: considering him as a fellow partaker of the same grace, he received him as the redeemed of the Lord, honoured his character, gloried in his friendship, and cheerfully associated with him in his labours in the chapels of Mr. Whitefield and the Countess, and during his visit to the metropolis of Ireland.

During this period Mr. Fletcher frequently preached at the French Church in Dublin, which was attended by the descendants of the persecuted Huguenots. The first time he preached there he selected for his text—"Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after you were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;" from whence he took occasion to refer to the sufferings and piety of their ancestors, and to enforce upon them the necessity of self-examination. Amongst his hearers were some persons who were totally unacquainted with the French language. Being questioned respecting the motives for their attendance, they instantly replied, "We want to look at him, for heaven seemed to beam from his countenance." This anecdote is so far interesting, as adding one testimony to innumerable others of the deep impressions which his amiable manners and heavenly countenance made upon the minds of all who saw him.

About the same time that Mr. Fletcher was in Dublin, the excellent Lady Mary Fitzgerald paid a visit to Ireland, and was hospitably received at the residence of Mr. Smyth, with whose lady and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Edward Smyth, she cultivated the closest intimacy and friendship, which continued unabated till their removal into another world. In the memoirs of Mr. Venn and Mr. Fletcher some of her Ladyship's letters have been preserved, and likewise several of those addressed to her by these apostolic men. She was a woman of piety and singular devotedness to God. Her unhappy marriage with George Fitzgerald, Esq., of the county of Mayo, was the fruitful source

* In Benson's "Life of Mr. Fletcher," see an excellent letter, addressed to Mr. Smyth, expressing his and Mrs. Fletcher's gratitude for the kindness shown them during their visit to Dublin.

of many of those afflictions which she was called to endure in the early part of her life. The dreadful quarrels which disunited and distracted that family, together with the outrageous conduct of Mr. Fitzgerald, compelled her to seek a separate maintenance. It was but a short time prior to Lady Mary's visit to Ireland that her eldest son, the well-known George Robert Fitzgerald, Esq., one of the most elegant and accomplished men of his day, at the general assizes for the county of Mayo, had been found guilty of an assault upon and false imprisonment of his father, and was sentenced by the court to be imprisoned three years, and to pay one thousand pounds sterling. Her Ladyship's stay in Ireland was not of long continuance, and she returned to England with Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher and Mrs. Smyth. Writing to Mr. Smyth, Mr. Fletcher says—"I must spare a line to tell you that I had the pleasure of seeing our kind benefactress, Mrs. Smyth, safe at Bristol, with her little charge,* and Lady Mary.†

Not long after the departure of Mr. Fletcher for England

* The eldest daughter of the Rev. Edward Smyth, who married Mr. Wilcox, Mary, the second daughter, called after her godmother, Lady Mary Fitzgerald, became the wife of the Rev. John Jenkins, formerly Curate of St. Mark's, Dublin. In May, 1783, Mr. Smyth lost his beloved and affectionate wife, who died in the full triumph of faith, in the twenty-eighth year of her age. Mr. Smyth was then residing in London, and a preacher in the chapels of Mr. Wesley. Through the whole of her illness, Mrs. Smyth was attended by Lady Mark Fitzgerald, who spent some hours with her each day. Soon after her decease, Mr. Smyth published an account of her life and dying experience, in one large volume, and a "Collection of her Letters," many of which were addressed to Lady Mary Fitzgerald.

† This excellent woman suffered many severe and extraordinary family afflictions. Her eldest sister, Lady Mulgrave, grandmother of the present Marquis of Normandy, the Colonial Secretary of State, was found dead in her bed. Three of her brothers were successively Earls of Bristol. The marriage of her brother George, the second Earl, with Miss Chudleigh, and her subsequent marriage with the Duke of Kingston, in his lifetime, which produced her memorable trial, in 1776, are well known. Frederick, the fourth Earl, for more than thirty years was bishop of Derry, where his conduct and example were so disgraceful, that he was compelled to retire to the continent, and spent the latter years of his life principally at Naples (where he was imprisoned for a considerable time), very unlike a dignitary of the Christian Church. His connexion with the profligate Lady Hamilton, and his Lordship's letter to her, published in her memoirs, merit the severest reprehension. About a year before Lady Mary's visit to Ireland, a large octavo volume, containing the disputes of this unhappy family, was published by her eldest son, George Robert Fitzgerald, Esq., who, a few years after, in a fit of passion, shot his coachman; for which offence he was tried and publicly executed. He married a daughter of William Conolly, Esq., of Stratton Hall, in Staffordshire, by the Lady Anne Wentworth, daughter of the last Earl of Stafford. Lady Anne Conolly was well acquainted with Lady Huntingdon, and frequently attended the preaching of the Gospel at her residence. Mrs. George Robert Fitzgerald was sister to Caroline, Countess of Buckinghamshire, and was received by her with every mark of attention at the Irish court, when the Earl of Buckinghamshire was appointed Lord-Lieutenant General, and General Governor of Ireland, a few years

Dr. Peckwell arrived in Ireland. The Doctor was rector of Bloxham-cum-Digby, in Lincolnshire, and chaplain to the Dowager Marchioness of Lothian. The first Sunday after his arrival in Dublin he preached in the morning at St. Thomas's Church, and in the evening at her Ladyship's chapel. On the following Sunday he preached at St. Mary's, and at St. Bride's in the evening.

"Immense congregations (says Dr. Peckwell) attended at every place, and I trust good has been done. Many of the higher orders inquire daily where I am to preach the following Sabbath; and some who have heard me in the churches follow me to the chapel on the week evenings. This is an immense field of usefulness, and there is abundant encouragement to press forward in the glorious work of preaching the everlasting Gospel of God my Saviour. Dear Mr. Shirley has been abundantly owned of God; and the labours of your Ladyship's ministers have tended powerfully to create a spirit of inquiry. Mr. Fletcher's ministry has been eminently useful; he has healed many divisions; and now very many of Mr. Wesley's people attend the word. The dry formal clergy have taken the alarm, and I expect a storm will soon burst upon me. But the Lord is my shield, and he will make the wrath of man to praise him. A Mr. Skelton* has behaved very kindly, and, though blind in spiritual matters, has procured me some pulpits. He is a man of extensive information, great learning, and universally liked. But from all I can learn, knows nothing of the Gospel of the Grace of God. The archbishop, I am told, has made some inquiries about me, and Mr. Skelton has had some controversy with the Dean of Christ Church, who is also Bishop of Kildare, relative to my preaching. I earnestly pray the Great Master of assemblies to bless his own word, and send it with power to the hearts of all who hear it, so that many in the last great day will be found to have been born in this great city, where there is an awful lack of the bread of life, and multitudes perishing without hope and without God in the world. In a few weeks I hope to give your Ladyship further infor-

prior to these disgraceful transactions. A monument to the memory of Lady Mary was erected in Mr. Wesley's chapel, in the City-road, London. Her Ladyship's second son, Colonel Charles Lionel Fitzgerald, of Oakland, in the county of Mayo, married a daughter of the late Sir Thomas Butler, Bart., of Garryhunden, in the county of Carlow. She died a few years since at Versailles, in France, where she had long resided. A funeral sermon for Lady Mary, preached at the Lock chapel, by the Rev. Thomas Scott, contains many interesting particulars of her Ladyship.

* Rev. Philip Skelton, rector of Fintona, in the county of Tyrone. His conduct as a clergyman was exemplary, and he was considered a very popular preacher. He was a great favorite with Lady Arabella Denny, for whom he preached frequently at the Magdalen chapel. Mr. Wesley makes mention of him in his Journal—"I spent an hour (says he) with Mr. Skelton, I think full as extraordinary a man as Mr. Law: of full as rapid a genius, so that I had little to do but to *hear*—his words flowing as a river." He died at Dublin in 1787. His principal works are—*Deism Revealed*, in 2 vols.; *Sermons*, in 3 vols.; *Miscellaneous Tracts*. See Life by Burdy.

mation. Next Lord's day I am to preach again at St. Bride's, and in the evening at the chapel. Mr. Smyth begs his most respectful regards may be presented to your Ladyship. He is the liberal friend of all good men. I have only time to assure your Ladyship how sincerely I am your devoted servant in the Gospel of our common Lord.

"H. PECKWELL."

The old Countess of Antrim and several persons of distinction having heard the Doctor, were desirous that he should preach at the Magdalen Chapel, which was then almost exclusively frequented by persons of the first rank and respectability. The Countess of Moira (Lady Huntingdon's eldest daughter), who appears to have taken a great interest in the success of Dr. Peckwell, made application for the use of the pulpit. The noble foundress of the Institution, the Lady Arabella Denny,* daughter of the first Earl of Kerry, and widow of Arthur Denny, Esq., of Tralee, representative of the county of Kerry, at first hesitated, recollecting the effects of Mr. Shirley's preaching, and fearful of again admitting any doctrine which might disturb the repose and security of the fashionable congregation that assembled at the Magdalen asylum; but on Mr. Skelton's assuring her Ladyship of the orthodoxy of his principles, and reminding her of the very favourable reception and countenance which her nephew, the Earl of Shelburne, afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne, had afforded Mr. Townsend, who had been sent over by Lady Huntingdon, Lady Arabella consented to allow Dr. Peckwell to preach in the chapel of the Institution.

The ecclesiastical instructors at the Magdalen were of the men described by Milton, to whom—

"The hungry sheep look up, but are not fed."

Dr. Peckwell, awfully conscious of the importance of his commission, and to whom alone he stood responsible, was fully determined to enter his protest against the style of preaching of those

"Who never mention'd hell to ears polite."

This faithful display of divine truth roused all the latent enmity of the unrenewed heart, and loud complaints were made of the very objectionable doctrines promulgated by Dr. Peckwell. Many of the congregation conceived themselves insulted at being placed on a level with the unhappy daughters of uncleanness—the victims of seduction and vice, who sat behind a screen; and would not be told that the hearts of all men were alike—that

* Lady Arabella was also sister of John, first Earl of Shelburne, and aunt to William, first Marquis of Lansdowne.

they were deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and though not guilty of such gross acts of sin, yet that the seeds of the same depravity reigned in the hearts of all; for "all had sinned and come short of the glory of God." Vexed at the murmurs of disapprobation, Lady Arabella in a moment of irritation charged Lady Moira with having deceived her in the character of the preacher. Capable of estimating the sacred truths advocated by Dr. Peckwell, and consulting the dictates of conscientious decision, her Ladyship thus replied to the foundress of the Magdalen:

"Conscious of the most upright intentions, and fearless of being branded with fanaticism, Lady Moira avows her firm conviction of the justness and propriety of all that was advanced from the pulpit by the respectable clergyman whom Lady Arabella Denny and others have charged with Methodism, and the propagation of new doctrines subversive of all morality and the Established Church; such charges become ridiculous and contemptible when unsupported by evidence, and put forth by persons who have never exerted one ray of intellect towards the discovery of truth from the prevalent errors of the day. If Lady Arabella Denny and her friends will be at the trouble of comparing the doctrines preached by Dr. Peckwell with the Thirty-nine Articles, and other parts of the Prayer Book, they may perhaps discover that those clergymen whom they so unsparingly vilify with every odious epithet are amongst the number of those who faithfully and conscientiously preach what they have so solemnly subscribed at their ordination."*

The controversy between the Countess of Moira and Lady Arabella Denny was soon noised about in the world of fashion, and considerable attention was excited towards Dr. Peckwell, whose pulpit talents and doctrines constituted the subject of this critical investigation. The friends of Lady Arabella made application to the Archbishop of Dublin to interpose his authority to put a stop to the progress of Methodism in the Church; and all the artillery of the Episcopal bench was soon directed against evangelical sentiments and *extempore* eloquence. But what arm of flesh shall stay the progress of the word of truth?

"The noise occasioned by my discourse at the Magdalen Chapel (says the doctor) has very considerably increased since my last letter to your Ladyship. Angry disputants have filled the ranks on both sides. My Lady Moira has written a sharp letter to the Foundress of the Mag-

* This note was copied from one in the handwriting of the late Mrs. Peckwell. It is written with spirit, but in a tone of great severity. But Lady Moira was a woman of superior intellect and information, and she was conscious of the inferiority of merit of those with whom she was acquainted. Lady Arabella was then an old woman, and acted upon the information of others. She died a few years after,

dalen, but I know not the result of it. Her Ladyship intends writing full particulars in a few days, so that you will have better information than I can give. Your Ladyship will smile at the expostulatory address to the Archbishop, praying him to stop the progress of what is called Methodism, by those deluded people whose enmity and rage against the truth as it is in Jesus has been so abundantly manifested by their late conduct and proceedings. But all this was the natural result of having attacked one of the strongholds of Satan. Comparative success has attended the effort, and when the flame of discord ceases to burn, and prejudices gradually cool, many timorous and feeble-minded persons, I doubt not, will join the proscribed party. Nevertheless there is a progressive increase, and I have a confidence in the ultimate triumph of the cause of God and truth, which animates me to more vigorous exertions in diffusing its hallowed light. God the Judge of all will mar the impotent attempts to retard the progress of his Gospel, and confound the enmity and rage of his enemies.

"Your Ladyship will be surprised to hear that Mr. Skelton made many enquiries after you—asked particulars of your opinions—and the theological system pursued at your Ladyship's College—and what notions you entertain on ecclesiastical discipline; to all which I replied I trust to his satisfaction. During the late dispute he displayed remarkable firmness and energy, though fiercely attacked by Lady Arabella Denny and her partizans. A letter from your Ladyship might be of use, for he seems to have an enquiring mind, and an ardent desire for truth. His system, as far as I can learn, very nearly assimilates to that of Mr. Law. Mr. and Mrs. Smyth fight manfully—their conduct is noble and catholic. The students in the University go on well—their number is increasing, notwithstanding great opposition from their superiors. The pulpits of St. Mary's, St. Thomas's, St. Anne's, and one or two others in the city parts, are still open to me. My time is fully occupied. O pray that I may be *faithful* in the delivery of my message—that great grace may descend upon all—and the word of our God have free course and be glorified in this populous city."

The present chaplain,* one of the Fellows of the University, is an able and faithful preacher of the truth as it is in Jesus, and his ministry is remarkably well attended by persons in the upper ranks of life.†

* The Rev. Joseph Henderson Singer, D.D.

† Dr. Peckwell, during this visit to Ireland, became acquainted with Miss Blosset, descended from an ancient French family long settled in Touraine, who, expatriated at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1589, and seeking an asylum in Ireland, settled in the county of Dublin, where the family estates lie. To this lady he was united, and by her had a son and daughter. After his return to England he was sent by Lady Huntingdon to serve Lady Glenorchy's chapel in Edinburgh, which was at that time supplied by the ministers in her Ladyship's Connexion; and his labours in that city in connexion with those of Mr. Townsend, of Pewsey, [were productive of the most beneficial effects. He was of a very humane disposition, and studied physic to administer to the necessities of the poor. He founded the "Sick Man's Friend Society," which he constantly laboured to support. He also patronized the Humane Society

On the departure of Dr. Peckwell for England, Mr. Shirley continued to labour in Dublin for some considerable time. His diligence and zeal in proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ are sufficiently tested in various parts of this work : but at length his honourable course was arrested, when his friends hoped that he was yet in the midst of his race, though his physicians and friends advised him, for the recovery of his health, to desist from preaching. The mortal career of this distinguished ambassador of the King of kings terminated on the 7th of April, 1786, aged sixty years and six months.* His disorder was of a dropsical nature : and for some time before his death he was totally incapable of remaining in bed. He died at the residence of his brother-in-law, the late George Kiernan, Esq., in Mary-street, Dublin. Sitting in his chair he frequently preached to great numbers, who crowded the drawing-rooms, the lobbies and the stair-case, as far as the voice of the preacher could be heard. The benediction of the Spirit of God rested on his dying labours, and bore testimony to the word of his grace in the

and the Society for the Relief of Persons Imprisoned for Small Debts. But in the meridian of life and usefulness, after a very short illness, this laborious and disinterested minister was taken to his eternal reward. The immediate cause of his dissolution was singular. The Doctor opened the body of a young person dead of consumption, whose lungs were in a very disordered state, and the chest full of putrid matter ; and in sewing up the body gave himself a wound with a needle, which on the tenth day proved fatal, August 18, 1787, in his 40th year. How unsearchable are the Lord's judgments, and his ways past finding out ! He, like Mr. Toplady, desired an unostentatious funeral, and forbade any public tribute to his memory, yet the Rev. T. Grove and the Rev. J. Townsend preached sermons on his death, which were afterwards published, with the elegy by Dr. Beck, of Bury-street meeting.

Mrs. Peckwell survived her husband nearly *thirty* years, and died at her residence in Wilmot-street, Brunswick-square, November 28, 1816. By this lady Dr. Peckwell left one son and one daughter. The late Sir Robert Henry Peckwell, Knt., who, assuming the name and arms of his mother's family, was well known and highly esteemed for many years as Mr. Sergeant Blosset. He was a member of Christ Church, Oxford, where he took his degree of A.M. in 1799. In 1804 he published, "Report of Cases on Controverted Elections," in 2 vols. 8vo. He was afterwards Chief Justice of Bengal, where he afforded his countenance in the support and encouragement of Christian Missionaries. Dying unmarried in 1828, he bequeathed his fortune to his only sister, who now enjoys it ; and after her death to her eldest son, or any other of her sons she should fix upon in preference, with entail to the remaining sons ; in default of male issue, to her immediate heir.

Selina Mary, only daughter of Dr. Peckwell, married George Grote, Esq., a justice of the peace for the counties of Kent and Oxford, and sheriff to the former shire in 1809 ; and by him, who died July 3, 1830, she had issue an *only daughter*, Selina (who married, in 1825, Lieutenant Colonel Frederick, of the East India Company's Military Service, Bombay, and died in 1826), and *eight* sons, among whom was George Grote, Esq., of Dulwich Wood, Surrey, the eminent banker in the city of London, and one of its representatives in Parliament.

* The library of the Countess's College, Cheshunt, has an original likeness of Mr. Shirley.

conversion, sanctification, and edification of many who heard him.*

To the kindness of the excellent James Ireland, Esq., of Brislington, near Bristol, Mr. Fletcher expresses himself indebted for the honour of a friendly interview with Mr. Shirley, whose circular letter he thought himself obliged to oppose. This was in the year 1777 ; and for the remainder of their course these good men continued upon the most friendly terms. They were called to their eternal reward within less than nine months of each other. Mr. Shirley was a little better than four years older than Mr. Fletcher. Having long laboured together, and “fought the good fight of faith,” they were permitted to “finish their course with joy,” and the concluding scenes of their warfare were triumphant and glorious.

About this period, the Rev. Mr. Boddily, who afterwards settled at Walsall, and eventually went to America, arrived in Dublin to supply her Ladyship’s chapel. This gentleman was educated at Trevecca, and laboured many years in the Connexion of his patroness. Many fashionable persons now frequented, the chapel which was too distant for them. Accordingly, in the month of July, 1784, the foundation-stone of a spacious place of worship, called “Bethesda Chapel,” was laid; an elegant and commodious edifice, capable of containing a very numerous congregation, situated in a part of the city, in the immediate

* In 1760, Mr. Shirley published a volume of Sermons, which he dedicated to his parishioners at Loughrea. Frequent mention is made of those sermons in the well-known controversy relative to the Minutes of Conference of 1770.—particularly by Mr. Fletcher, who gives several quotations in his “First Check to Antinomianism,” which was addressed to Mr. Shirley. A Poem on Liberty was printed at the end of the Sermons. Mr. Shirley was the author of several well-known hymns in Lady Huntingdon’s collection ; particularly—

“From heaven the loud, the angelic song began,” &c.

“Hark ! in the wilderness a cry,” &c.

“Flow fast my tears, thy cause is great,” &c.

“Sweet as the Shepherd’s tuneful reed,” &c.

“Source of light and power divine,” &c.

There are also some in other collections, and a few little poems scattered in various periodical publications. The lines on the departure of the Missionaries from Lady Huntingdon’s College for America in 1772, under the direction of Mr. Piercy, have been much admired ; they were re-published in the *Evangelical Magazine*, in 1796, on the departure of the ship Duff, for the South Sea Islands. The prominent part which Mr. Shirley took in the controversy relative to the obnoxious tenets contained in Mr. Wesley’s Minutes of Conference of 1770 is well known ; and the “*Narrative*” of that affair, which he published at the time, is now so scarce that a copy cannot be procured. He likewise assisted Lady Huntingdon in the selection of hymns now in use in the congregations in her Connexion. In 1775 Mr. Shirley wrote a recommendatory preface to Dr. Sibb’s “*Meditations and Holy Contemplations*,” which were published with a dedication to Lady Huntingdon and a preface by Mr. William Millar.

neighbourhood of Rutland and Mountjoy squares. It was erected at the sole expense of the late William Smyth, Esq. The day previous to its dedication, Mr. Smyth, accompanied by a few friends, went into the chapel, and kneeling in the centre, in a short but pathetic prayer besought God to bless the preaching of his word in that place. The voice of prayer was heard and answered; and on the last great day many, very many, no doubt will be found to have been born there. On the 25th of June, 1786, the chapel was opened according to the forms of the Church of England. The Rev. Edward Smyth and the Rev. William Mann were the first chaplains. Mr. Smyth added an Orphan School and Asylum, for female children only, who are lodged in apartments over the chapel. To this was annexed a Penitentiary, or Asylum for the reception and employment of Destitute Females leaving the Lock Hospital, who are accommodated in an excellent building attached to the chapel and are supported by contributions, by the collections in the chapel, and by the produce of their own labour, in calendering, washing, mangling, &c. The performance of divine service at this chapel is rendered more affecting and impressive than in most other places of worship owing to the plaintive melancholy tone in which the responses are delivered by the penitents, who are concealed from view by a curtain in front of their seat.

It was about the period of the opening of Bethesda, or the Lock Chapel, as it was sometimes called, that the Rev. Timothy Priestley* removed to Dublin, at the request of Lady Huntingdon, to take charge of the congregation in Plunket-street chapel. Her Ladyship entertained a very high opinion of his piety and talents, and appears to have recommended him in very strong terms.

* Mr. Priestley had been labouring in Manchester for upwards of eighteen years, during which period he frequently visited London, and preached at the Tabernacle, where he was an occasional supply for many years. Being there in the year 1774, when his brother, the well-known Dr. Priestley, was at Lord Shelburne's in Berkeley-square, as they were one day walking in the street, the Doctor appeared particularly struck with the great difference in their acquaintance and situations in life. He said, two brothers were surely never thus situated; it mortifies me when I am told "there is a brother of yours preaching at the Tabernacle." With Lord Shelburne, Lady Huntingdon was well acquainted. He was the patron of the celebrated Alderman Townsend, and afforded his countenance and support to his son, Mr. Townsend of Pewsey, when sent to preach in Dublin by Lady Huntingdon. His lordship was intimate with the late Gilbert Ford, Esq., Attorney-General for Jamaica. Two of his brothers, Thomas Ford, Esq., Clerk of the Arraignment (who died May 3, 1768), equally celebrated for his eminence and extensive practice; and Dr. Ford, Physician to the Queen (son of Sir R. Ford), so justly esteemed for his knowledge in the obstetric art, frequently attended the preaching at her Ladyship's house, and were amongst the number of those who were honoured with her friendship and esteem.

A little anecdote which occurred some years prior to this period, may not be considered as unworthy of insertion in this place, and thus rescued from oblivion. Miss Ford, daughter of the Clerk of the Arraignment, was one of the most singular and accomplished women of her day. She was a musical genius of the first rank, and her private concerts attracted the notice of all the gay and fashionable world. Whilst at Bath, on a visit with Governor and Lady Betty Thickness, she was in the constant habit of attending Lady Huntingdon's chapel, then so much frequented by the nobility, and her fine voice was frequently distinguished in the congregation. She had been taught to read by Sheridan, the father of the late orator, was well acquainted with Garrick, and received private lessons from Mrs. Cibber to qualify her to shine on the stage. Her education would at this day be very expensive; it was *then* estimated by her father at from four to five hundred pounds per annum. Unwilling to live under the vigilant control of a fond parent, this singular woman privately withdrew from the paternal mansion; but a warrant, granted under the signature of Sir John Fielding, soon restored her to her father. Taking an unhappy aversion to a man whom Mr. Ford considered a suitable match for his daughter, she eloped a second time; and instead of resigning herself to grief and melancholy, determined to turn her talents to advantage, and by one bold effort render herself independent. As Miss Ford had lived in habits of familiarity with the first nobility, she conceived the idea of rendering their patronage subservient to her scheme. The Opera-house was accordingly hired, and a fine band of music prepared for *three nights only*. But this scheme had nearly been deranged, if not entirely annihilated, by her father. Angry at her having left his house, and abhorring the idea of his daughter appearing on the stage for any period, however short, or under any circumstances, however favourable, he applied to the same magistrate who had before assisted him, and all the avenues to the Haymarket were occupied by Sir John's runners. But they were soon dispersed by Lord Tankerville, then an officer in the Guards, who threatened to punish any interference on their part, at a time *when some of the Royal family* were expected to be present.

The timidity incident to a first performance was in some measure repressed by the kindness and support of her friends. Prince Edward condescended to drink a cup of tea with her in the green-room, on which occasion his equerry, Colonel Brudenel, brother to the Duke of Montague, stood behind his chair, and soon after handed her to the stage door, where she was

received with bursts of applause. Nor was the audience disappointed, for when Miss Ford sang one of Handel's oratorio songs, beginning—

“Return, O God of Hosts !
Relieve thy servant in distress !”

she displayed such exquisite sensibility, that many of her friends burst into tears.

There is, perhaps, no other instance on record in the annals of the English stage, when one person alone entertained a numerous audience during three successive nights, and realized so much at the end of that period. Some relaxation, after such an exhausting effort, now became necessary, and having raised an independence, she accepted an invitation from Governor and Lady Betty Thickness, and accompanied them into Suffolk, where she remained till the death of the latter. A few years after she was married to the Governor, on which occasion upwards of 300 ladies and gentlemen were present. Governor Thickness was the father of the late Lord Audley, with whom he had some dreadful disputes, which became the subject of a singular publication many years ago. This eccentric character died in 1792—Mrs. Thickness surviving him many years. She is well known in the literary world by her “Lives and Writings of the most eminent ladies of France,” and her “School of Fashion.” Mr. Ralph Thickness, an elder brother of the Governor, was a man of genius, and the friend of Pope, Warburton, and Mr. Allen, at whose house Lady Huntingdon sometimes met him. He died suddenly, as he was playing the first fiddle in a composition of his own in a morning concert at Bath. The celebrated Dr. Oliver, a particular friend of Lady Huntingdon's, who was at his elbow when his head fell, was of opinion that the stroke was hastened by the anxiety he was under for the well-performance of his composition; and wrote some elegiac lines to his memory, which may be seen in Nichol's Bowyer, vol. ix. p. 253.

Miss Ford, being led from the drawing-room to the parlour, on a visit to Lady Huntingdon, found all the party standing behind their chairs, while her ladyship uttered a “drawling methodistical prayer:” the company were persons of distinction. Lord*

* Lord Cathcart was one of the sixteen representatives of the Scottish peerage, Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and some years after Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Empress of Russia. His lordship was no less distinguished for the virtues which adorn private life, than eminent for all those which exalt public character; and exceeded by none in discharging with dignity and ability the duties of the high stations in which he was placed by his sovereign.

and Lady Cathcart (at whose residence, in Edinburgh, Mr. Whitefield was so kindly entertained), the Countess of Chesterfield, Countess Delitz, Lady Selina Hastings, Miss Barlow (the friend of Lady Selina), and the Hon. William Hamilton (brother to Lady Cathcart, and at that period an officer in the third regiment of Foot Guards). These distinguished persons, accustomed perhaps to the strange intonation and uncommon cadence of Lady Huntingdon, betrayed no surprise, but Miss Ford absolutely tittered, to the great annoyance of her uncle, the Attorney-General, who apologized for her levity, and she made her peace by setting to music the hymn beginning, "All ye that pass by," &c.

It was at Lady Huntingdon's residence that Mr. Hamilton, afterwards Sir William Hamilton, first met Miss Barlow, the only child of Hugh Barlow, Esq., of Lawrenny Hall, in Pembrokeshire, to whom he was afterwards married, and with whom he received a large estate. Sir William was soon after appointed Ambassador to the Court of Naples, which he enjoyed with the uninterrupted approbation of the two courts for *thirty-six* years. Lady Hamilton* (for whom Lady Huntingdon had a very sincere esteem and affection) died at Naples, August 25, 1782, and was buried in Wales.

Mr. Priestly appears to have continued in Dublin about two years, and then to have removed to London, upon a call to succeed the Rev. Mr. Woodgate, in Jewin-street, where he continued till his death in 1814. Few persons had a higher opinion of Lady Huntingdon, or entertained a stronger feeling of veneration for her exalted worth, than Mr. Priestley. Soon after the death of her Ladyship he was prevailed upon, by many who loved her and revered her memory, to preach a funeral sermon, which was published with the following title: "A Crown of Glory preferable to all the Riches of this World."†

The beginning of the year 1787, Mr. Wesley paid a visit to Dublin.

"On Saturday, April 7 (writes Mr. Wesley), I preached in Bethesda (Mr. Smyth's new chapel). It is very neat, but not gay; and I believe

* It was the *second* wife of Sir William Hamilton (a woman of low origin) whose conduct towards the hero of the Nile rendered her so conspicuous. She was an ill-principled woman, and from great affluence was reduced to abject poverty.

† The following singular address to serious Christians, of all denominations, was prefixed to the sermon:—

"Erasmus, the learned Dutch Reformer, mentions a preacher at Rome, who was imprisoned for saying in his sermon, that St. Peter and St. Paul were both fools. On his trial before the Pope and Cardinals, he thus explained himself: 'Either they were both fools, for living so poorly, or you, their successors, for

will hold about as many as West-street Chapel. Mr. Smyth read prayers and gave out the hymns, which were sung by fifteen or twenty fine singers. It was thought we had between *seven* and *eight hundred* communicants. And, indeed, the power of God was in the midst of them. On Monday and Tuesday I preached again at the Bethesda, and God touched several hearts, even of the rich and great; so that (for the time at least), they were *almost persuaded to be Christians*. It seems as if the good providence of God had prepared this place for those rich and honourable sinners who will not deign to receive any message from God but in the genteel way."

On the following Sunday Mr. Wesley again preached at Bethesda Chapel. "Many fair blossoms we see here (says he), and surely some fruit will follow!" Mr. Wesley made a tour through a part of the country, and returned to Dublin to attend the Conference in the beginning of July. During the sitting of the Conference, he preached at Bethesda to an exceedingly large congregation.

"And (he observes), we had a brilliant congregation, among whom were honourable and right honourable persons. But I felt they were all given into my hands: for God was in the midst. What a mercy it is, what a marvellous condescension in God, to provide such places as Lady Huntingdon's chapels for those delicate hearers who could not bear sound doctrine, if it were not set off with pretty trifles!"

In the year 1717 a number of persons in Dublin, connected with Lady Huntingdon's Chapel, the Scots' Church, Bethesda Chapel, and the Church of the United Brethren, deeply affected by the state of religion in the kingdom, which at this period and for some time previous, had been such as could not but give pain to every serious and discerning mind, met to advise and adopt some plan to check the growth of irreligion and vice, and to promote a spirit of vital godliness. The Episcopal Protestant Established Church of Ireland was rich in titles and estates, but poor in labours and in success. The Clergy, not deficient in literature, abundant in wealth, cherished in the bosom of power, and supported by the strong arm of civil authority, headed by a

living so luxuriously.' So it may be truly said, that former professors were either fools for disregarding the world so much, or those of this day are such for so greedily grasping its riches and honours. To this latter, how striking a contrast do we find in the late departed and honoured Lady! An ancient painter, being censured for describing two of the apostles with very florid countenances, replied, "I paint them blushing at the ambition of their successors." It is only living fishes that go against the stream. It will be no advantage to have Christ in the mouth, if the world be in the heart. To see goodness in greatness, is a wonder to angels, fills godly professors with admiration, extorts awe and reverence from deists, and confounds worldly professors as much as the speaking of the ass checked the madness of the prophet Balaam. Great subjects will only be relished in great minds.

considerable number of Archbishops, Bishops, and other dignified Ecclesiastics, with pure doctrine in her Articles and Liturgy, and employed to diffuse divine truth among the Irish people, all of whom, as they tithed, they doubtless counted themselves bound to teach, shamefully neglected the people, and presented a phenomenon which never did, and it is hoped, never will again, appear in the Christian world. The criminal sloth of the clergy, and their great inattention to the people, must astonish as well as shock every pious and candid mind; and to seek a parallel in any other Church in Europe, of whatever name it may be, would be a vain attempt. It was during this period there arose that valuable and useful class of men whom Mr. Newton distinguishes in England by the appellation of "awakened clergy." We have seen the labours of the great Methodist leaders and those zealous clergymen of the Church who co-operated with Lady Huntingdon. The ministration of Messrs. Shirley, Piers, De Courcy, Houghton, Townsend, Peckwell, and Smyth, had a mighty influence in reviving a spirit of inquiry, and leading very many to a saving acquaintance with the great truths of the Gospel. They were pious, laborious, and zealous men; and their labours were crowned with considerable success. They were the only ministers in the Established Church who then preached the Gospel of the grace of God in that country. They were often rigorously opposed and grievously harassed by some of the highest dignitaries of the Church, who, by such proceedings, gratified those who sought her degradation or her ruin. But the effects which were produced by their preaching were to them incontrovertible evidences of the approbation of God: they therefore stood in the midst of all opposition,

"As an iron pillar strong,
And stedfast as a wall of brass!"

If Ireland ever become Protestant, it is by men of their spirit the work must be accomplished.

To the respectable and pious persons who thus merged all minor differences in the name of CHRISTIAN, it appeared that the most likely way to accomplish the great and desirable object they had in view would be to gratify that taste for variety which is essential to the human mind, by furnishing a succession of zealous and popular ministers of every denomination, who should be employed to preach occasionally wherever an opportunity should offer, either in the city or in the country. A beginning was then made, by forming a society under the name of "The General Evangelical Society," and a subscription was opened for raising a fund to defray the expenses of such ministers as

might from time to time comply with the invitation of the society. One of the first who laboured in this plenteous harvest was the late Rev. Rowland Hill, who, in the autumn of 1793, visited Ireland, and found pulpits open to him in Dublin and other places. At first he was allowed the use of St. Mary's, St. Bride's, and other Churches, but this permission was soon withdrawn, and he preached frequently at Bethesda Chapel, at Lady Huntingdon's, the Scotch Church, and many other places. To Mr. Hill, succeeded the Rev. Dr. Jones, minister of Lady Glenorchy's chapel in Edinburgh; the Rev. Dr. Rippon, of London; Rev. Samuel Medley, of Liverpool;* Rev. Benjamin Francis, of Horsley; Rev. Isaac Birt, of Plymouth Dock; Rev. Samuel Pearce, of Birmingham; and again by the Rev. Rowland Hill, in 1796.

On Mr. Priestly leaving Ireland, he was succeeded in the charge of the congregation in Plunket-street by the Rev. James Bakewell Wildbore, who had been minister of a congregation at Falmouth, long supplied by the Rev. Thomas Jones, afterwards of Oathal, and other ministers in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. Under his faithful preaching, with the divine blessing upon it, a considerable revival of religion was experienced in Dublin, and several members were added to the church. Mr. Wildbore afterwards settled at Macclesfield, and in 1793, resumed his paternal relation with the people among whom his ministerial labours had commenced. After this second union with the church at Falmouth, Mr. Wildbore continued to labour among them till April 1817, when through infirmities of age, he resigned a charge which he had held with high respect, usefulness and comfort, for upwards of thirty years. He ended his days in peace, April 14, 1822, in the eightieth year of his age.

The Rev. John Ball was invited by the congregation to preach to them after Mr. Wildbore returned to England. He had been invited over to Ireland by the General Evangelical Society, and was sent to Sligo, where his message was well received. The preaching of Mr. Hawkesworth and other ministers in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, in that town, had made a deep impression on the minds of many, and several were called to

* This respectable minister was originally in the navy, and engaged in several actions. Being severely wounded he was permitted to return to his grandfather's house till perfectly recovered. As soon as he was able to go abroad, he attended with his grandfather (a deacon of the Baptist Church in Eagle-street, London) the ministry of Mr. Whitefield and Dr. Gifford, when it pleased God to lead him to a saving acquaintance with divine things. He was twenty-seven years pastor of the Baptist Church at Liverpool, and during that period one of the regular supplies at Tabernacle and Tottenham-court Chapel, where his ministry was greatly owned. He died July 17, 1799, aged sixty-one.

the knowledge of the truth. This little band remained united, and were occasionally favoured with a visit from the ministers and students sent over by her Ladyship. On the formation of the General Evangelical Society, Sligo engaged its early attention; a chapel was built by the aid of gentlemen in the town and of friends at Dublin.

Mr. Ball remained but a short time in Dublin, and only supplied the congregation till the arrival of the Rev. James Garie, on the 12th of September, 1789. The amiable and exemplary conduct of this gentleman recommended him to the patronage of Lady Henrietta Hope, and after her death, Lady Glenorchy, apprised of Mr. Garie's worth, received him into her house, and considered it no small acquisition to have him so near her. Mr. Garie was employed as chaplain in the family, her ladyship generally assisting in exercises of devotion herself, by reading the Word of God. But the career of this eminently devout lady's usefulness closed about a year and a half after he went into her family; and she drew her last breath while this honoured servant of God was by her bedside addressing the throne of grace in her behalf.

But her ladyship, fully satisfied of the propriety of encouraging Mr. Garie's views towards the ministry, bequeathed to him in her will a sum sufficient to prosecute his pious intention. And it deserves to be mentioned, to the honour of her executrix, the late Lady Maxwell, that though the will happened not to be signed, she gave Mr. Garie to the full amount of what his dear deceased friend and noble patroness intended.

On his first setting out in the ministry, Mr. Garie preached occasionally for the Rev. Thomas Grove, who was then situated at Rotherham, and also for the Rev. Jonathan Scott in Staffordshire, where he remained till invited by the congregation in Plunket-street, where his labours were continued about five years; during which time he also preached occasionally in the neighbourhood of the metropolis. About two months after his arrival in Dublin he made a preaching excursion to Sligo and other places; and on his return to Dublin, in compliance with the wishes of his congregation, he proceeded to England, and on the 10th of December, of the same year, was solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry over the people at Dublin and Sligo, at Newcastle-under-line, by the Rev. Jonathan Scott, W. Boden of Hanley, and others.

Mr. Ball continued to labour at Sligo with considerable success. On the 2nd, of January, 1791, the new chapel was opened by Mr. Garie.

“From the first coming of the ministers of the Evangelical Society

to this town (he writes), God, in various ways, seemed to favour the undertaking. Great numbers attended—their behaviour was decent and serious—the congregation was seldom or never disturbed—many more, deeply impressed with the great truths they heard, became thoughtful and circumspect. The Protestants, in general, seemed to give the things they heard a candid reception; and even some of the Papists attended with seriousness, and spoke favourably of what they heard. Thus it continued for a considerable time. While the house was building, some threats were thrown out, but disregarded, and to the great joy of the people, it was opened on Sunday, the 2nd of January, 1791. The congregation was numerous and attentive. On the evening of the next day the windows were broken open, and three large branches, which were designed for lighting the house, stolen. This distressed, but did not discourage the people. The public spoke of the action with marked disdain; and we soon supplied the want of sconces with small white iron sockets affixed to each of the pews. The congregation continued to increase, so that the house was quite thronged, and a divine influence seemed to attend the word. Great seriousness appeared during divine worship; many became thoughtful; an anxious spirit of enquiry was discovered [in some, formerly careless; and such as had through grace believed were comforted and established, and very happy in the prospect of good being done. We now had preaching twice on the Sabbath, a weekly lecture on Wednesday evening, and prayer-meetings every other evening, except Saturday. Our happiness was great; our hopes many; our comfortable house, our sweet meetings, our attentive audiences, and above all, our enjoying sensibly the Divine presence, made us think that the time to favour God's cause in this distant corner of the world was come. In conversation we spoke of, and at the throne of grace we prayed for, primitive Christianity, real religion, in its native power and extensive influence. Little did we think that God was about to satisfy our desires and answer our prayers in a way so trying to human nature.”

But now the enemy began to rage furiously, threatening destruction to this infant cause of God. After the Wednesday evening Lecture was over, and the congregation had quietly retired to their respective dwellings, the persecutors violently forced open the strong iron bars that were placed across the windows, broke the glass, tore the sashes, and endeavoured otherwise to destroy the building. Next day, the perpetrators of the outrage avowed what they had done, and that it was their fixed determination to burn the house and level it with the ground. These persons, insanely wicked, powerful in their connexions, and pushed on by secret hellish Popish malice, disregarded the laws both of God and man. The people were reviled and distressed; the chapel was exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and it became necessary to suspend the evening services. The final destruction of the place of worship

was determined to be effected a few nights after this outrage, and it was thought prudent to set men to watch, in order to defeat the attempt. These were in the chapel when lighted candles were put to the shutters, which were soon on fire. Mr. Albert Blest, a gentleman greatly devoted to God, and much honoured as an instrument for propagating and maintaining the cause of God in Sligo, was applied to, and at the request of Mr. Blest, took his pistols with him. Desirous of preserving the place of worship, he reasoned with the gentleman who was the leader of their gang, and would probably have prevailed on him to give up so black a design, had not some of his accomplices interposed, and with imprecations, threats, and blows, provoked Mr. Blest to fire the pistol, which hurt no one. Mr. Blest retreated from them, and being a stout man, kept them at bay, but they followed hard after him, and happening to stumble at his own door, he fell, when they got above him, and most likely would have murdered him, had he not been rescued from their hands by one of his Roman Catholic servants. Mrs. Blest, who was then in a way to become a mother, was the distracted spectator of this outrageous attack upon her husband. Their house was threatened, their windows broken, and their children, twelve in number, exposed. Mr. Blest, being threatened in his person and property, left his house next morning to avoid their rage, and continued away for some time. After he returned, he, with his brother-in-law and two servants, lay in prison for some time; and were, together with his father and two of his servants, tried for their lives, but were honourably acquitted. Mr. Blest's counsel having got the hint that the prosecutors had obtained a jury that were resolved to criminate his client, cast every one of them, and others were appointed in their stead. Divine Providence, by this circumstance, delivered a good man from the determinate malice of his enemies.

Mr. Garie left Sligo immediately after the trial, having been there between three and four months; during a considerable part of which time he was frequently in imminent danger of his life, and had to change his resting place every night. At one time, the gentleman mentioned above came in quest of Mr. Blest's brother-in-law, with fire arms, and, after searching the house from room to room, came into that in which Mr. Garie was. Upon his entering the room, with a pistol in his hand, Mr. Garie arose from his seat, and holding a small Bible in his hand, with a smiling countenance, looked his rude visitor in the face. The man, struck and confounded with Mr. Garie's amiable and innocent appearance, immediately retired.

It may excite astonishment that the executive power was in-

effectual to afford protection to loyal subjects, while quietly attending to the things that concern their everlasting peace! But so it was; and the most daring atrocities were too frequently committed with impunity. But amidst all the storm which for some time raged at Sligo, He who ruleth over by his power, though he was pleased, for the trial of his servants, to permit "men to ride over their heads," and to answer their prayers "by terrible things in righteousness," was still present with them, accompanying the ministration of the word with his divine blessing, to the everlasting benefit of many, who were plucked as brands from the burning. Some who came to hear for the purpose of ridicule and derision, were compelled, by the powerful efficacy attending the declaration of divine truth, to retire to meditate and pray. One of these, Mr. William Henry, afterwards became a preacher of the faith he once attempted to destroy. Having devoted himself to the service of the heathen, with *twenty-eight* other missionaries, he was solemnly designated to the work, in Lady Huntingdon's chapel (Sion), London, July 28th, 1796, and embarked on board the ship Duff, destined to convey them to the Island of the South Seas.

Mr. Ball resumed his labours at Sligo on Mr. Garie's return to Dublin; but how long he continued with the people we have not been able to learn. He afterwards settled with a congregation at Westbury, in Wiltshire; from whence, after a few years, he removed to London, to succeed the Rev. Dr. Povah, at Jewry-street Chapel. Being recommended to that congregation by the Rev. Matthew Wilks, of the Tabernacle, he was requested, in the month of July, 1801, to pay them a visit for a few weeks upon trial; and his ministry being approved, he was invited, in October following, to take upon him the pastoral office. Mr. Ball died in London, April 3, 1811, in the 43rd year of his age, leaving a widow and six children. In 1807 he published a defence of the Rev. Rowland Hill, in a pamphlet, entitled "Animadversions on 'An Admonitory Epistle to the Rev. Rowland Hill, occasioned by the republication of his Spiritual Characteristics, or Most Curious Sale of Curates.'"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Mr. Edward Smyth and Mr. Mann—Mr. Walker—Mr. Maturin—Mr. Kelly—
Mr. Walter Shirley—Miss Maturin—Letter from Mr. Walker—Mr.
Matthias—Dr. Thorpe—Anecdote of the Stewart family—Mr. Horne—Mr.
Pearce visits Ireland—Mr. Rowland Hill's visit to Ireland—Miss Johnson—
Mr. Alderman Hutton opens his House for preaching—General Evangelical
Society—Mr. Cooper invited to Ireland—Mr. Shaw—Mr. Roe—United
Brethren—Prosecutions—New Chapel in Dublin—Reflections on Lady
Huntingdon's Labours to spread the light of the Divine Truth.

THE Rev. Edward Smyth, after some years preaching in Bethesda Chapel, in conjunction with the Rev. William Mann, A.M., resigned his situation and removed to Manchester, where he afterwards became minister of St. Clement's and St. Luke's Churches. Mr. Smyth had been a member of Mr. Wesley's Connexion, but had withdrawn. Mr. Mann was a Calvinist in sentiment, consequently there was a difference in their sermons, which led to party feelings and discussions, that ended in a separation. Mr. Smyth published the Book of Common Prayer, with some few alterations, and a very large collection of Hymns for the use of the congregation. This was followed, in 1791, by a very admirable collection compiled by Mr. Mann, with a well-written preface. Mr. Mann, who remained some time after Mr. Smyth resigned, removed to London, where he became evening preacher at Ely Chapel. In 1804 he was chosen by a great majority, (300 to 25,) one of the Chaplains of St. Saviour's, Southwark, to succeed the Rev. William Winkworth, who had been one of Lady Huntingdon's ministers, and educated at her College, at Trevecca.

To Mr. Smyth and Mr. Mann succeeded the Rev. John Walker, one of the Senior Fellows of the University, a man of extraordinary abilities and great learning, and the Rev. Henry Maturin, also a Senior Fellow of the University, and afterwards rector of Fanet, a living in the gift of the College. They were of the five ministers prohibited by the Archbishop of Dublin from preaching in the churches of his diocese, and who betook themselves to Bethesda Chapel. The Rev. Thomas Kelly,*

* Mr. Kelly is well known for a volume of very beautiful Hymns, most of which he has set to music of his own composing. He married Miss Tighe, of Rosanna, in the county of Wicklow. Her mother, Mrs. Tighe, was the only child of Sir William and Lady Betty Fownes, and inherited their large fortune and estates. When resident in Dublin she was an occasional attendant at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel, where she was awakened to a sense of divine

only son of the Right Hon. Chief Baron Kelly, the Rev. Walter Shirley,* son of the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, the Rev. Mr. Stephens, who had been ignominiously driven from the Magdalen Chapel, and some others, sounded the Gospel trumpet.

One of the first fruits of their ministry was the late Miss Maturin, who for many years adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour by a holy life and conversation. Her family were of great respectability—her father a beneficed clergyman, her grandfather the Dean of St. Patrick's. She was sister to the Rev. Henry Maturin, already mentioned, and another of her brothers, Gabriel Maturin,† Esq., married the youngest daughter of the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, one who had been her intimate friend for a series of years, and who, like her, had derived a considerable benefit from Mr. Walker's ministry.‡

As a Clergyman of the Church of England, and a Senior Fellow of the University of Dublin, he thought he infringed no rule that was obligatory, or was guilty of any criminal irregularity by preaching at Surrey Chapel. The well-known Mr. Venn preached statedly at that place for a number of years—so did Mr. Scott, of the Lock—so did Mr. Pentycross—so did Mr. Berridge—so did Mr. Jones (of Langan)—so did Mr. Charles, and many others long since gone to their eternal rest.

The preaching of Mr. Walker afforded Mr. Garie consider-

things. She was a woman of great piety and benevolence, and erected a small chapel at Willowbank, near her residence, where there was constant preaching. Her sister-in-law, the late Mrs. Theodosia Blackford, daughter of Mr. and Lady Mary Tighe, and great grand-daughter of the celebrated Earl of Clarendon, was likewise a woman of singular excellence, and the foundress of a most excellent institution, called the "House of Refuge." In early life she was also an attendant at Plunket-street Chapel. The death of her only daughter, the late Mrs. Henry Tighe, author of "Psyche," and other poems, preyed much upon her mind in latter years. Mrs. Blackford was the author of several little tracts, and translated from the French the Memoirs of the Baroness de Chantel.

* Mr. Shirley married, in 1796, Alicia, daughter of Sir Edward Newenham, and has issue Walter Augustus, in holy orders, born 1797, and married, in 1827, to Maria, daughter of William Waddington, Esq.

† One of his sons, Washington Shirley Maturin, Esq., married, December 26th, 1836, his cousin, Elizabeth, daughter of the late Lieut. Col. Phillips, of the Royal Marines.

‡ A volume of Miss Maturin's letters was printed some years since by John Synge, Esq., of Glenmore Castle, in the county of Wicklow (nephew of the late Archbishop of Tuam), at his private printing press, and obtained a wide circulation among her friends and admirers. Miss Thompson, of Kilbricken, was one of her correspondents, and the early associate of Miss Maturin, Miss Brook, and Miss Edgeworth. She became the second wife of Mr. Slack, of Armanale, in the county of Fermanagh, a gentleman of fortune and great piety. The first Mrs. Slack was called "The Queen of the Dale" by the late Dr. Coke, who had a high esteem for her. She was a member of Mr. Wesley's Society.

able encouragement, and he rejoiced that the Lord was raising up faithful witnesses to proclaim the glad tidings of redemption within the walls of the Established Churches. When speaking of this circumstance, at the beginning of the year 1792, he says :—"the Lord has in some measure appeared for his cause in this city, by raising up Mr. Walker, Fellow of Trinity College, to preach in the Churches with much zeal, simplicity, and clearness. This has afforded me much pleasure and encouragement. May the Great Head of the Church bless his labours !" On another occasion he writes :—"Breakfasted this morning with my dear friends, Messrs. Walker, Maturin, &c., at College. O, how pleasing to see God raising up pious, zealous, wise young men in that place ! Lord Jesus, add to their number !" Not long after this period, the Rev. Benjamin William Matthias* and the Rev. William Thorpe began to add their voices to the testimony of Jesus. These gentlemen were likewise originally connected with Lady Huntingdon's Chapel, and formed part of the plenteous harvest of immortal souls gathered to the true Shiloh in that place. Oh ! how many in the last great day will have reason to bless God for having put it into the heart of the Countess of Huntingdon to send the blessing of a free salvation to the Irish shores ! From her chapel all the other congregations in this populous city have emanated. For a considerable number of years it stood, as it were, alone, and was the only place where the ministers of the Gospel distinguished themselves in the service of the crucified Redeemer with zeal and fidelity. Thither all the awakened people fled for refuge, and great and small bore testimony to the signal displays of gospel grace, under the ministry of these faithful labourers in the Lord's vineyard.

Willmott House was now open for the preaching of the Gospel. Clergymen of the Church of England, the preachers in Mr. Wesley's Connexion, Moravian ministers, and ministers of other denominations here found a welcome ; and the faithful

* Mr. Matthias commenced his useful ministry as curate of Rathfriland, of which the venerable and excellent Mr. Tighe was the worthy rector. But the doctrine of the cross was not confined to the walls of the parish church : on the neighbouring mountains this faithful minister of Christ proclaimed the good tidings of salvation to listening thousands, and God immediately began to bless his testimony. The family of the late Mr. Stuart, of Willmott, was converted by means of a maid-servant, a hearer of Mr. Matthias, and who was an instance of religious heroism in humble life. Through her labours nine sisters became pious. Three of them afterwards married Evangelical preachers—Mr. Matthias, the Rev. Blayney Mitchell, and the Rev. Edward Hoare, late curate of St. Mary's, Leicester. Mrs. Bellingham, Mrs. Hannah, and Mrs. Flood, have been called to their eternal rest.

success. Mr. Matthias was much owned in the field of usefulness; but about the year 1804 he was induced to remove to Dublin, having been invited by the trustees* to succeed Mr. Walker, as chaplain of Bethesda and of the Lock Penitentiary: at this latter place he was associated with the Rev. William Thorpe,† who had been curate of one of the city churches, which, however, he resigned on becoming assistant to Mr. Walker.

Towards the close of 1794, Mr. Garie left Dublin and entered on the duties of his office as minister of a chapel-of-ease at Perth, in connexion with the Established Church of Scotland. There he continued usefully and successfully employed till his death, January 14th, 1801. To Mr. Garie succeeded Mr. Richardson, who had been settled at Wem, as minister of the chapel which had formerly been in Lady Huntingdon's possession. He married in Ireland Miss Donovan. The Rev. Andrew Horne was the next minister of Plunket-street Chapel. Having commenced his studies at Cheshunt College, under the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, he was publicly ordained to the office of the ministry in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, June 13, 1797, at Sion Chapel, London, together with Mr. Lewis, Mr. Wilkins (late of Abingdon), Mr. Mather (the present minister at Beverley, York), and Mr. Cooper, who some years after succeeded Mr. Horne in Dublin. The Rev. Thomas Williams, of Stepney, who had been educated at Trevecca, opened the service with prayer. The Rev. Thomas Young (then of Canterbury, but now of Margate) addressed the congregation, and called on the candidates for an account of their experience and call to the ministry. Mr. Cooper read the articles of faith. Mr. Nicholson, president of her Ladyship's College, prayed, and, with Mr. Young, Mr. Kirkman, and Mr. Rowland, ordained

* Bethesda chapel was vested in five trustees, all Clergymen of the Church of England.

† Rev. William Thorpe, A.M. and M.D. He was educated at Trinity College, where he took his degree. He afterwards studied medicine at Edinburgh, where he took the degree of M.D. The father of this gentleman was for many years a deacon of the church in Plunket-street. Some years since Doctor Thorpe removed to London, and became Minister of Ely Chapel, Holborn, and lecturer of St. George the Martyr. He was subsequently chaplain of the Lock Hospital, a place formerly of great notoriety, and minister of Belgrave Chapel. Prior to his removal to London, he brought himself into notice by some pamphlets against Catholic Emancipation, which were written with great spirit and ability, and were dedicated to the Earl of Liverpool. He also published a sermon, preached at St. Andrew's, of which he was curate, and a short account of Mrs. Hoare, wife of the late Rev. William D. Hoare, of St. George's, Limerick. A few years since, Dr. Thorpe married, for his second wife, the widow of the late Earl of Pomfret.

them by imposition of hands. Mr. Nicholson then gave the charge, and Mr. Rowland closed the solemn service with prayer. This vast edifice was filled the moment the doors were open, and thousands were obliged to depart without being able to get within the doorway.

In the summer of 1796 the Rev. Samuel Pearce, of Birmingham, arrived in Dublin, in compliance with the invitation of the General Evangelical Society. Several ministers of the Baptist denomination had been there before him, as Messrs. Rippon, Langdon, Francis, and Birt. "Having engaged to spend six Lord's days in that Kingdom (writes Mr. Pearce), I arrived there the day before the first Sabbath in June. I first made myself acquainted with the general state of religion in Dublin. I found there were four Presbyterian congregations; two of these belong to the southern Presbytery, and are Arians or Socinians—the other two connected with the northern Presbytery, and retain the Westminster confession of faith. One of these latter congregations is very small, and the minister, though orthodox, appears to have but little success. The other is large and flourishing; the place of worship ninety feet by seventy, and, in the morning, well filled. Dr. Mc. Dowell is the senior pastor of this church—a very affectionate, spiritual man. The doctor is a warm friend to the society of whose request I went over to Ireland. There is one congregation of Burgher Seceders and another of Antiburghers. Lady Huntingdon has one society here, the only one in the kingdom perhaps, except at Sligo, where there is another. There is not one independent Church in the kingdom. There were ten Baptist societies in Ireland—they are now reduced to six, and are, I fear, still on the decline."

When Mr. Pearce had been in Dublin but a very short time he wrote thus to Mr. Pearce:—

"I am delightfully disappointed with the place and its inhabitants. I have found much more religion here already than I expected to meet with during the whole of my stay. I am at the house of a Mr. Hutton, late high sheriff of the city, a gentleman of opulence, respectability, and Evangelical piety. He is by profession a Calvinistic Presbyterian—an elder of Dr. Mc. Dowell's church—and has a most amiable wife and four children. The Lord's day after I wrote to you last, I preached for Dr. Mc. Dowell in the morning, at half-past eleven—heard a Mr. Kilburn at five—and preached again at Plunket-street at seven. On Tuesday evening I preached at an hospital, and on Thursday evening at Plunket-street again. Yesterday, for the Baptists in the morning, Dr. Mc. Dowell at five, and at Plunket-street at seven. I thank God that I possess an abiding determination to aim at the *consciences* of the people; in every discourse I have borne the

most positive testimony against the prevailing evils of professors here, as sensuality, gaiety, vain amusement, neglect of the Sabbath, &c., and last night told an immense crowd of professors of the first rank 'that if they made custom and fashion their plea, they were awfully deluding their souls, for it had always been the fashion to insult God, to dissipate time, and to pursue the broad road to hell; but it would not lessen their torments there that the way to damnation was the fashion.' I expected my faithfulness would have given them offence; but I am persuaded it was the way to please the Lord, and those whom I expected would be enemies are not only at peace with me, but even renounce their sensual indulgences to attend on my ministry. I have formed a most pleasing acquaintance with several serious young men in the University here, and with two of the Fellows of the College, most pious gentlemen indeed, who have undergone a world of reproach for Christ and his Gospel, and have been forbidden to preach in the Churches by the Archbishop; but God has raised another house* for them here, where they preached with much success, and have begun a meeting in the College, which promises fresh prosperity to the cause of Jesus."

Mr. Summers afterwards visited Dublin, and accompanied Mr. Pearce during the latter part of his visits in the neighbourhood, particularly at Blackrock† and Lexlip.

Shortly after the departure of Mr. Pearce from Ireland, Dr. Rippon received two letters from Dublin, one from Dr. Mc.Dowell, and another from Mr. Howard,‡ an aged deacon in that city, in which Mr. Pearce's labours were very highly estimated.

Not long after Mr. Pearce had returned to Birmingham, Mr.

* Bethesda Chapel.

† A considerable bathing-place, situated on the sea-side, about three miles from Dublin, and the residence of a vast number of the most genteel families in the vicinity of the capital. During his labours in Ireland, Mr. Pearce was strongly solicited to settle at this place, and a very liberal salary was offered him. On mature deliberation, he thought it his duty to decline it. A very neat and commodious chapel was afterwards erected at this place, at the sole expense of the Rev. Thomas Kelly, and for a number of years was supplied by him and the preachers in connexion with him. About twenty years ago it was disposed of to some of the leading members of the congregation of Bethesda Chapel. In this populous neighbourhood the Rev. Mr. Matthias and Dr. Thorpe laboured alternately for some years with great utility. Several other evangelical clergymen also occasionally preached there. For a long series of years it was the only Protestant place of worship in that neighbourhood. The present minister is the Rev. John Crosthwaite, formerly curate of St. John's, and chaplain to the Molyneux Blind Asylum.

‡ Deacon of the church in Plunket-street. For some years before his death this excellent man withdrew from Plunket-street, and became member of the congregation at Bethesda Chapel. He lived to a great age, and died a few years ago in peace. He resided with his daughter, Mrs. Cuthbert. It was at his house that Mr. Hawkesworth remained a great part of the time he was in Dublin. Of the same "set" was the Rev. Hans Hamilton, D.D., son of Dr. Hugh

Hill paid a second visit to Ireland. His first trip to Dublin was in 1793, when his presence and advice were peculiarly useful to those ministers of the Church of England who were at that time suffering much obloquy and persecution for the faithful testimony which they bore to the great doctrines of the Reformation. He had found a ready access to the affections of the pious people in Dublin, and his name has ever been held in high veneration in that city. Letters to him from his Irish hearers bear testimony of his zealous exertions there, and to the revival at that period of the work of religion among them. A clergyman pressed him to go to the north of Ireland to "proclaim the word of life in his parish," where he tells him that notwithstanding the numbers of Papists among his people, a work of grace was going on. His vivid imagination, animated manner, liveliness of disposition, and rooted abhorrence of Popery, suited in a high degree the pious Protestants who crowded around him. Letters still in existence from his Irish friends express their assurance of his deep sympathy in the awful scenes so frequent during the heat of the rebellion in that country. Wherever he went his presence inspired such confidence and regard, that those whom he admitted to any degree of intimacy looked upon him as a friend and brother, to whom they might appeal for advice and consolation in the difficulties and trials by which they were afterwards surrounded.

Prior to the breaking out of the rebellion in 1798, when political parties ran high, and the cloud which afterwards burst was gathering in blackness, a few persons of the highest respectability, whose minds had been touched with a deep sense of eternal things, desiring to profit by the awful appearance of the times, and anxious for their country's welfare, came to the determination of having meetings for prayer, with a particular view to the state of the nation. The residence of Mr. Alderman Hutton, close to St. Stephen's Green, was opened for this purpose on Friday evenings. Messrs. Walker and Maturin (Fellows of the University), Mr. Kelly, Mr. Shirley, Mr. Matthias, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Thorpe (all Clergymen of the Established Church), and many occasionally from the country; with Dr. Mc. Dowell (the senior minister of the Scotch Church); Mr. Hartley, minister of the Moravian chapel; Mr. Horne, Mr. Cooper, and other ministers in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, laboured in this

Hamilton, late Bishop of Ossory, and elder brother of the Rev. George Hamilton, who married Miss Sophia Kiernan, niece of the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley. Dr. Hamilton married the third daughter of the Right Hon. Silver Oliver, of Castle Oliver, in the county of Limerick, sister to Lady Mountsandford, and aunt to Henry, second Baron Mountsandford.

field of usefulness to much purpose. Great numbers attended; the drawing-rooms, lobbies, and staircase were often crowded to inconvenience, and the word of the Lord no sooner began to be preached in the light and the love of it, than it immediately ran and was glorified. Many seals were there given to their labours.*

In May, 1798, the rebellion broke out with alarming violence: terror and dismay were visible in every countenance; and never, perhaps, did the Lord appear more awful as coming out of his place to punish the inhabitants of a land for their iniquity. The Lord maketh the wrath of man to praise him; and has promised that when his judgments are abroad in the earth the inhabitants thereof shall learn righteousness. This promise he graciously fulfilled during the disturbances that at this time agitated Ireland.

During this awful period the labours of the Evangelical Society were singularly useful in exciting a spirit of inquiry throughout the kingdom. The itinerants went forth under their patronage, and proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ in the highways and hedges, and wherever an opportunity presented itself. The visit of the Rev. Samuel Pearce, of Birmingham, to Ireland, in 1796, was attended with considerable success. His preaching was not only highly acceptable to every class of hearers, but the word came from him with power, and there is abundant reason to believe that many will, through eternity, praise God for sending his message to them by this highly-gifted ambassador of Christ. He was earnestly solicited by the General Evangelical Society in Dublin to renew his visit in 1798, to assist in diffusing the sweet savour of the Gospel of God our Saviour. Ready to embrace every call of duty, he had signified his compliance, and the time was fixed; but the

* Amongst the rest the late Miss Johnson, since removed to her eternal reward, who a thousand times lifted up her voice in praises that ever these ministers of Christ proclaimed his everlasting love and mercy in that place. She was amongst the first fruits of the harvest gathered at Mr. Alderman Hutton's house, and to the period of her decease adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things. The Alderman's house was in the neighbourhood where Miss Johnson resided, and the preaching there naturally became the subject of conversation in the circle in which she moved. Induced by curiosity she went to this meeting. The novelty of the scene attracted her attention, and its solemnity made an impression on her mind. It was different from any thing she had before witnessed; equally free from the dry formality to which she was accustomed, and the wild enthusiasm that has too frequently disgraced the name of vital godliness. For some time she continued her attendance; and from the place where she had been professedly waiting upon God, would depart to the place of public resort to spend the remainder of the evening. This, however, appeared to herself an inconsistent line of conduct; she saw the necessity of abandoning the prayer-meeting or the promenade, and determined it should be the latter.

breaking out of the Irish rebellion prevented him from realizing his intention. This was a painful disappointment to many, who wished once more to see his face, and to hear the glad tidings from his lips.

The summer of the succeeding year, the late Mr. Alderman Hutton happening to be in Bristol, the Rev. William Cooper, then in the zenith of his popularity, was supplying Lady Huntingdon's chapel in that city. He had been recommended to the notice of Lady Anne Erskine, who, instead of sending him to the College at Cheshunt, appointed him to preach in some of the principal chapels in the Connexion. In August, 1796, the day on which he completed his twentieth year, he preached a sermon to the Jews, at Sion Chapel, London, to an immense concourse of people, among whom were many of the descendants of Abraham. The crowd was so great that the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, President of Cheshunt College, the Rev. William Roby, of Manchester, and the Rev. Mr. Carter, a minister in the Connexion, preached without the doors to many thousands of people, who were unable to gain admittance. The discourse, with another in the same place on the 18th of September following, was afterwards published, and rendered the author exceedingly popular. On the 13th of June, 1797, he was ordained to the work of the ministry, in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, at Sion Chapel, together with five others. Mr. Alderman Hutton was so struck with the zeal and abilities of Mr. Cooper, that in the name of the Evangelical Society, he invited him over to Dublin, to try and diffuse in that region the light of the Sun of Righteousness. Lady Anne Erskine hesitated not to comply with the wishes of the Society, and in the summer of the same year Mr. Cooper commenced his useful ministry in Dublin. From thence he went to the north of Ireland, and on the 4th of June, 1799, we find him preaching at Moy, in the county of Tyrone. Considerable attention was excited to the word of life in that neighbourhood; after which the Rev. George Hamilton, of Armagh, and other ministers in connexion with the Evangelical Society, preached there occasionally. During the summer of 1800 Mr. Gregory preached once a fortnight in the open air to about one thousand persons, and a subscription was then commenced for erecting a place of worship. By the liberality of the inhabitants of Moy and its vicinity, with the assistance of the religious public, who knew its destitute state, that town being about three miles from any regular place of Protestant worship, a neat and commodious chapel was erected, to be supplied by evangelical ministers of every denomination. It was

solemnly dedicated on the 19th of May, 1802, on which occasion two sermons were preached; that in the morning by the Rev. George Hamilton, of Armagh, from 2 Sam. vii. 12 "*Ebenezer*" the name of the chapel; and that in the evening by the Rev. W. Gibson, of Rich-hill, from Luke xix. 9, "This day is salvation come to this house." The Rev. George Maunsell, of Drumeree, concluded the solemn and interesting services of the day by prayer and giving out the hymn—"All hail the power of Jesu's name," &c., which was sung by a numerous congregation with the most enlightened devotion.

We have already seen an abundant harvest produced from the seed which was cast into the Gospel field; and with earnest hope and joyful expectation the people of God looked for a yet more abundant crop. Many were ready to exclaim—

"Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand;
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land.
Lo! the promise of a shower,
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour
All the Spirit of his love."

The light of divine truth now burst forth in several parts of the kingdom, and men were qualified and sent forth by the great Head of the Church to proclaim the glory of his name and the riches of his salvation. Two beneficed clergymen—the Rev. Robert Shaw, a near relative of Sir Robert Shaw, Bart, many years representative of the city of Dublin, and the Rev. Peter Roe, rector of St. Mary's, in Kilkenny, the son of a respectable physician in Dublin—now began to bear a faithful testimony to the grace and atonement of the Redeemer. They frequently visited the metropolis, where many churches were open to them. Wherever they preached amazing multitudes thronged every part of the largest edifices, and the "signs and wonders which were wrought by their instrumentality were to themselves and others indubitable proofs that the "Lord God and his Spirit had sent them."*

Towards the close of the year 1801 the late Rev. John Hart-

* Several others were also raised up about this period to testify the Gospel of the grace of God; the Rev. Blayney Mitchell, Rev. Berkeley Mitchell and Rev. George Maunsell, afterwards Dean of Leighlin. This gentleman, at the commencement of his ministerial course, preached every where with great zeal and success, and occasionally officiated in the Countess of Huntingdon's chapel in Dublin. He is from a family of ancient descent and high alliances. His father was M.P. for Kilmallock, and his mother a daughter of Richard Waller,

ley arrived in Dublin, and on the first sabbath in November entered upon his public labours, preaching from these words—“I have much people in that city.” The German Lutheran congregation in Dublin being without a minister, Mr. Hartley for two years preached a sermon in the German language every other Lord’s day in the afternoon. His stay in Dublin was but of short duration, for he was removed to Gracehill, in the county of Antrim, to superintend the extensive settlement in that place. This was his last removal, till called by death to take possession of that “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” which was prepared for him ere time began.*

At this period the Evangelical Society having resolved to send missionaries into Ireland, made application to the Rev. John Eyre, of London, one of Lady Huntingdon’s ministers, and Robert Haldane, Esq., of Edinburgh, whose general knowledge and disinterested zeal gave sanguine hopes of success, and who, on various occasions, evinced the interest they took in the welfare of the Society. From the former gentleman they obtained one itinerant, William P. Crook, who had been a missionary at the Marquesas; and from the latter four, Messrs. Henderson, Hamilton, M’Kenzie, and Laurie. Aided by Mr. Cooper, Mr. Horne, and Mr. Gregory, regular supplies were now obtained for Cork, Waterford, Limerick, and many of the principal towns in the kingdom. The Rev. Claude Morrison, the Rev. Berkeley Mitchell, and Mr. Gunn, who laboured in connexion with Mr. Kelly, who had erected chapels at Blackrock, Athy, and other places, itinerated in various directions, and were every where heard with attention. Mr. Cooper and Mr. Kelly likewise made a preaching tour through the south of Ireland.

The Rev. John M’Kenzie, one of the itinerants, was sent to New Ross in the summer of 1802; after hearing service in the parish church, he assembled in company with many respectable

Esq., of Castle Waller, in the county of Limerick. One of his sons, an eminent barrister, married Lady Catherine Hare, daughter of the Earl of Listowel; and his youngest daughter was wedded to the Rev. William Atthill, an evangelical preacher, rector of Fentona, in the county of Fermanagh, and a near relative to Dr. Porter, late Bishop of Clogher. Dean Maunsell and Mr. Atthill are trustees of Bethesda Chapel, and the latter a constant preacher there.

* This useful minister of Christ finished his course June 17, 1811, in Dublin. The Rev. John Swertner, at that time minister of the Brethren’s church, in Dublin, preached his funeral sermon. This excellent man, whose private papers have contributed much useful matter to these memoirs, has likewise finished his race. He removed to Bath, and afterwards to Bristol, where he ended his days March 11, 1813. By his marriage with Elizabeth Cennick, only daughter of the Rev. John Cennick, founder of the Brethren’s churches in Dublin and the north of Ireland, he had two daughters; one died young, and the other, born deaf and dumb, survived her father.

inhabitants of the town, in order to preach in the open air. Having begun the service, while in the act of prayer, and immediately after he had been praying for the king, Henry Loftus Tottenham, Esq., a magistrate, and sovereign of Ross, came with a military guard, and brought Mr. M'Kenzie to the gaol, where he was confined from two o'clock on Sunday till eleven o'clock on Monday, when he was discharged. Mr. M'Kenzie brought an action for damages against Mr. Tottenham, and the cause was tried at the next assize at Wexford, March 29th, 1803, before the celebrated Lord Norbury. The learned judge, in a very able charge to the jury, cited the several laws on our religious liberty, which the jury were called on that day to support; and expressed the pleasure he felt, in the discharge of his duty, in vindicating the religious liberty of Ireland, in opposition to the magistrate of Ross, who, it appeared, had framed laws for himself. The jury after retiring for half an hour, brought in a verdict against Mr. Tottenham* of *two hundred pounds damages and costs.*†

It has already been stated that the congregation at Sligo was originally gathered by the labours of the ministers in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, under whose ministry not a few were brought to taste that the Lord is gracious. The preaching of Mr. Garie and Mr. Ball, who remained some considerable time at Sligo, was attended with very great success, and many were added to the church of such as shall be saved. On Mr. Ball's return to England, the congregation were supplied by the ministers in connexion with Mr. Kelly, and the itinerants under the General Evangelical Society. On the 4th of July, 1802, the Rev. Claude Morrison, who had been educated in the seminary established by the munificence of Mr. Haldane, at Glasgow, under the superintendence of the Rev. Greville Erving, was ordained pastor of this church. The service was held in the chapel of the Rev. Thomas Kelly, at Blackrock, near Dublin, when Mr. Gunn, Mr. Horne, and Mr. M'Kenzie took part in the solemnity. A very suitable and impressive charge was given

* It is peculiarly gratifying to state that several of the Tottenham family have since been the zealous supporters of evangelical principles and preaching. The Rev. Edward Tottenham, of Bath, is one of this family.

† There was another trial about the same period in Dublin, of three rioters, who were found guilty of a riot at Harold's Cross, near Dublin, while Mr. Gregory was preaching on the green. Lord Avonmore expatiated very largely on the laws which they had broken, and proved that, had there been any lives lost, the prisoners would have been guilty in the eye of the law, and capitally convicted. They were sentenced to three months' imprisonment. These trials operated as a caution to others who would disturb the public peace and good order on such occasions, or violate the sacred laws that guarantee religious liberty.

by the Rev. Andrew Horne, from Acts xx. 28, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves," &c. The service concluded by singing the hymn—

"Let Zion's watchmen all awake," &c.

and the numerous congregation who assembled to witness this novel scene were dismissed with the usual benediction.

In the month of July, 1802, the late indefatigable Rowland Hill again visited Ireland. He landed at Waterford, and preached in that city, where he found a small band of people, who had originally been collected by Mr. Hawkesworth and other ministers in the Countess's Connexion.

On leaving Waterford, Mr. Hill proceeded to New Ross, not long after Mr. Tottenham's attempt to suppress the promulgation of divine truth in that town. To the pulpit of the Rev. George Carr, an evangelical clergyman, whose ministry has proved a blessing to many in that town and neighbourhood, Mr. Hill was welcomed, and he preached to overflowing congregations with his accustomed zeal and success. He also preached for Mr. Kelly, at Athy, and at one or two other places on his way to Dublin. On Sunday the 1st of August, Mr. Hill opened his commission with a very powerful sermon at Bethesda Chapel in the morning, and in the evening at Plunket-street. Both discourses were in aid of the funds of the General Evangelical Society, and upwards of one hundred and twenty pounds were contributed. After this Mr. Hill made an excursion to the north of Ireland.

After preaching at Bethesda Chapel, Plunket-street, and at Mr. Alderman Hutton's house, Mr. Hill embarked for England on Wednesday the 25th of August. Mr. Walker had left Ireland for England the very day on which Mr. Hill arrived in Dublin; and Mr. Matthias was supplying his place at Bethesda Chapel till his return. About the same time that Mr. Hill was in Ireland, the Rev. Thomas Williams, of Stepney, who had been a student at Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca, paid a short visit to Dublin, and preached in Plunket-street, Swift's-alley meeting-house, and the Danish Church, to very crowded auditories. He was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Shoveller, of Portsmouth, who had been recommended to the Society by Dr. Ryland, of Bristol, and Mr. Birt, of Plymouth. He also preached at Swift's-alley and Plunket-street, and was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Stennett in the month of October. About the same time the Rev. Berkeley Mitchell, who had been preaching in Mr. Kelly's connexion, accepted an invitation from the congregation of the late Rev. Philip Oliver, at Boughton Chapel, Chester,

It was likewise about the same period that the Rev. Blayney Mitchell, one of the students at the University, and brother-in-law to Mr. Matthias, who had been preaching in Dublin and other places with great zeal and success, was appointed to the curacy of Ballinrobe, in the county of Mayo. Such was the state of religion in this unhappy country in the year 1802. At that time there were not *ten* ministers in the Established Church, labouring within the strict pale of regularity, who preached the doctrines of the Gospel and the Reformation! Blessed be God for the wondrous change which hath since ensued! Within the last thirty years the number of those who lie under the imputation of Methodism has grown into the number of a host. And may God the Spirit still give more abundant increase!*

It was during this year that a large school-room, situated at a distance from Plunket-street Chapel, was fitted up and opened for a Sunday evening lecture.

This year Henry Hutton, Esq., alderman, and late high sheriff, served the office of chief magistrate of the city of Dublin, with high credit to himself and to the general satisfaction of his fellow-citizens. He was voted a gold box and a valuable

* The absence of Mr. Horne from Plunket-street was, on some occasions, supplied by Mr. Crook, who was much esteemed by the congregation. In March, 1803, he embarked for England, for the purpose of going once more as a missionary, under the London Missionary Society, to the island of Otaheite, in the Pacific Ocean. During his residence in Dublin Mr. Horne published a collection of hymns for the use of the congregation in Plunket-street. He married a Miss Eyres, a lady of considerable talents, and much piety. She possessed great musical abilities, and was the composer of some very popular airs, especially the music of "Head of the Church Triumphant," and "Blow ye the trumpet, blow," &c.

In the early part of the year 1803 Mr. Horne accepted the call of the trustees of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion to superintend the College at Cheshunt; and he accordingly left Dublin for that purpose on the 12th of March. He did not, however, remain long at Cheshunt. He was afterwards situated at High Wycombe, in Buckinghamshire. On his departure from Dublin the congregation in Plunket-street were supplied by the Rev. William Gregory, who had been one of the missionaries on board the missionary ship *Duff*, when she was captured on her voyage to the South Sea Islands. He was solemnly designated to the important work at Spa-fields Chapel, in November 1798, on which occasion Dr. Haweis read the prayers of the Established Church, and the Rev. John Eyre, A.M., formerly a student at Trevecca, delivered a charge to the missionaries. Mr. Gregory, with three others, was afterwards ordained at Surrey Chapel, when Mr. Hill read the Church prayers, and Mr. Howell, of Knaresborough, prayed the ordination prayer; after which Dr. Waugh preached, and Mr. Hill gave an affectionate charge to the missionaries. Shortly after Mr. Gregory's return to England, he formed a connexion with the Rev. William Ross, who had just left Cheshunt College, where he had been educated under the able superintendence of the worthy President, the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, and they obtained possession of Salem Chapel, Shadwell, which had been for some time shut up. Mr. Gregory was employed by the Evangelical Society to itinerate in different parts of the country, but on account of his engagement to preach in Plunket-street, his connexion with the Society ceased.

piece of plate ; and his great attention to the observance of the Sabbath, is mentioned in three public addresses from the city. About this time the worthy Alderman opened a school at the rear of his house, for the education of poor children, in which lectures were delivered every Saturday evening to overflowing congregations.

Mr. Cooper succeeded Mr. Horne in Plunket-street. Under his ministry the church and congregation rapidly increased, and his popularity continued undiminished to the close of his ministerial labours in 1829. He was called under Mr. Caldwell* and Mr. Haweis, at the same time with Mr. Sage, who soon became a preacher of that Gospel which had proved the power of God to his salvation ; but his race was short in this capacity, for he was called to his eternal rest in February, 1799, at the early age of thirty-two years.†

It was now that a new chapel was erected for the preaching of the Gospel by clergymen of all persuasions, whose doctrine was evangelical. At the first meeting upwards of seven hundred pounds was subscribed, and Mr. Cooper was engaged to supply the pulpit four months in the year. After much diligent inquiry, a plot of ground was obtained at the corner of York-street, on the west side of St. Stephen's Green, eligible in every respect for the building. This was purchased by the trustees for the sum of *three thousand pounds*, of their own proper money ; and they in every respect made themselves liable for rent, taxes,

* The Rev. Robert Caldwell rose from an obscure situation to that of a respectable minister in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. Disliking an itinerant mode of life, he resolved to take the first opportunity of settling, and cheerfully accepted the call of the people at Silver-street Chapel to succeed the Rev. Thomas Wills. He preached his first sermon there February 16, 1800, from the following words :—" I am determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." His services were so acceptable that the congregation, which had declined during the latter part of Mr. Wills's time, began to revive. But the pleasing prospects entertained by his friends were speedily withered by his untimely death, on the 16th of April, 1803, in the forty-fifth year of his age. Mr. Caldwell, though not distinguished for literary attainments, was an affectionate and acceptable preacher. His delivery, however, was somewhat too rapid. During the time he was at Silver-street he was very popular.

† See Memoirs of Thomas Sage, by the Rev. William Cooper. A funeral sermon was preached at Spafields Chapel for Mr. Sage, by his friend, Mr. Cooper, February 20, 1799, a short time before his first visit to Ireland. To elegance in writing Mr. Cooper never pretended, and he has modestly cautioned the religious world not to expect from him any "great display of literature," or perfection of style." The following is a list of his publications :—" The True Messiah," 1796. " The Promised Seed," 1796 : both preached to the Jews at Sion Chapel. " Daniel's Seventy Weeks," 1796, also preached to the Jews. " Letters on Religious Subjects," 1806. " The Flying Angel ;" a sermon preached at Armagh before the Evangelical Society of Ulster. " A Collection of Hymns for the congregation in Plunket-street," and a few tracts.

interest, and expenses thereof, for the purpose of erecting a chapel for the celebration of divine worship. The trustees were nine in number,—Alderman Henry Hutton, Michael Blood,* Joseph Wilson, Thomas Oldham, Edward William Burton,† William Macauley, Archibald Hamilton, John Robinson, and William Osborne, Esqrs.; most, if not all, of whom have long since been removed to another world. The plan was on a far more extensive scale than any place of worship in Dublin, being eighty-six feet by seventy-two. By letting and selling a part of the ground, the trustees were enabled to hold the chapel rent-free for ever. In the year 1805 the subscriptions amounted only to one thousand pounds, so that the trustees were obliged to make an appeal to their more opulent brethren in England. This appeal was published in the “Evangelical Magazine” for 1805, at which period Mr. Alderman Hutton‡ and Dr. M'Dowell visited London, for the purpose of collecting; and, with the kind assistance of the Rev. Rowland Hill, Rev. Matthew Wilks, Rev. Dr. Haweis, Rev. John Eyre, and others, they collected about *two thousand pounds*. On Sunday, the 4th of July, 1808, the spacious edifice was dedicated. The Rev. Thomas Harding, a respectable clergyman, who had been for many years one of the committee of the General Evangelical Society, read the prayers of the Establishment, after which the Rev. Rowland Hill preached from 1 Cor. ii. 2, “I am determined not to know anything among

* Mr. Blood was descended from a highly respectable family in the county of Limerick. He was a consistent member of the Church of England, and a regular attendant at Bethesda Chapel to the period of his death. He was a man generally respected; his integrity was inflexible; his attachments were cautiously formed, but unshaken; his manners were unaffected, yet dignified; and he despised all art and cunning, especially under the cloak of religion. His brother, the Rev. Neptune Blood, a pious clergyman, and rector of Roxburgh, in the county of Clare, first introduced the Moravians into that part of Ireland, where they had a small settlement. Mr. Blood left a daughter by his second wife, Miss Cecilia Compton, of Limerick.

† Mr. Burton was a man of family, and a worthy member of the church of the United Brethren. He married one of the sisters of the above Michael Blood, Esq. One of his daughters married the Rev. John Hutton, only son of Mr. Alderman Hutton; the other, Maurice Fitzgerald, Esq., of Limerick. She died in Piercy-street, London, in 1821. Her amiable Christian disposition and deportment through life greatly endeared her to all her numerous connexions. Mr. Fitzgerald afterwards married the relict of Michael Blood, Esq.

‡ This excellent man enjoyed tolerable health till within a short period of the day of his death, February 8, 1808. He was twice married. By his first wife, Miss Barber, he had a son and four daughters, one of whom, Sarah, married Higginson Johnson, Esq., and another, Susan, John Guinness, Esq., younger brother of Arthur Guinness, Esq., of Beaumont, near Dublin. By his second wife, Miss Olivia Mason, only daughter of Joseph Mason, Esq., and sister of William Shaw Mason, Esq., author of the “Statistical Survey of Ireland,” and other works, he left three daughters. One of the Members for Dublin is the Alderman's nephew.

you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." From which, after expatiating on the doctrine of the Gospel of Christ and the importance of that doctrine to sinners, he assured the people that it was determined not to know anything else in that place: the bond of Christian union not at all interfering in the disputes or distinctions of sects or parties, on account of subordinate matters. In the evening the Rev. John Hutton,* assisted by Mr. Harding, read the service, and Mr. Hill again preached from Titus ii. 14.

This was Mr. Hill's fourth and last visit to Ireland. After his departure, the chapel was supplied by the Rev. George Clayton, of Walworth. To him succeeded Mr. Maslen, of Hertford, Mr. John Clayton, sen., of London, Mr. Leifchild, Mr. Mark Wilks, Dr. Bennett, and many others, who were well attended and much approved. This method of supplying the chapel being attended with considerable expense, and the plan not succeeding according to the wishes of the trustees, some difference of opinion took place amongst them. The chapel underwent a different arrangement, and is now a regularly organized Independent church, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Urwick. From this congregation emanated two others, the one called "Ebenezer Chapel," the other "Zion Chapel." The former was opened on the 5th of Nov. 1820, by the Rev. Dr. Cope, then tutor of the Irish Evangelical Academy, and the Rev. John Petherick, minister of the chapel; and the latter by Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, on the 20th of July, 1821, who preached both morning and evening. A son of the Rev. William Cooper is the pastor of this congregation.

"According to this time, it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, what hath God wrought?" How has this little grain of mustard seed become a goodly tree, extending its branches over a great part of the kingdom! To the self-evident excellency and grandeur of the cause, and to the interposition of "the God of the spirits of all flesh," to whom the salvation of human beings is dear, must be ascribed the surprising success which has crowned the zealous endeavours of the venerable Countess to make known the transcendent blessings of the redemption of Christ, and unfurl the banners of his cross in a country deep sunk in Popish superstition, and covered with the shadow of death. Endued with a deep sensibility for the ignorance and

* Son of Mr. Alderman Hutton. He was for a short period curate of St. Andrew's; afterwards curate to Mr. Biddulph, at Bristol; subsequently settled at Coleshill, in Warwickshire; then curate of Glenfield, near Leicester, and of Church Lawford, in Warwickshire; whence he removed to Sproxton, near Melton Mowbray, in the vicinity of which he has a small rectory.

misery of her fellow-mortals, how zealously and perseveringly did this excellent woman exert her time, talents, fortune and influence to spread the glorious Gospel of the ever-blessed God! And how hath it pleased the great Lord of the harvest to crown her labours in this widely-extended field, and smile upon whatever she undertook for the furtherance of this grand object! The little one, planted and watered with many prayers to the great and glorious Head of the Church, hath become a strong nation. Churches have been formed in various parts of the kingdom, and are daily receiving additional members, many of whom are fervent followers of the Saviour, who stand ready to do whatever their hands find to be done, for the glory of God and the salvation of their fellow-men.

Within the pale of the Established Church there has been a wonderful extension of divine truth. The congregation of Bethesda Chapel had its origin in an amicable withdrawal from Lady Huntingdon's Chapel of such persons as resided at an inconvenient distance from Plunket-street, which was situated in a part of the city little frequented by persons of respectability. The faithful proclamation of the word of life in Bethesda Chapel has been attended with the happiest results. The light has shone from thence to the remotest parts of the kingdom; and more than *five-and-twenty* young men from that congregation have passed through the University, and are now consecrating all their talents to the Redeemer's glory and service. More than *fifty* clergymen, some holding high and honourable situations in the Church Establishment, have from time to time sounded the Gospel trumpet in that highly-favoured place; and many of the mighty, the wise, and the noble* of the land have there been enclosed in the Gospel net.† Amidst the awful and general departure from the faith, as once delivered to the saints in the Church of England, and sealed by the blood of our reformers, it is pleasing to observe that there is a remnant, according to the election of grace, who continue rising up to testify the Gospel of the grace of God, and to call back their

* Amongst the many noble families and persons of distinction who frequented Bethesda Chapel, few were more conspicuous than that of the Earl of Clancarty. The noble testimony borne to the faith and hope of the Gospel on a death-bed, by the late Lady Emily La Touche, proved the life of many of her numerous family and connexions. She was attended in her last moments by her brother, the present Archbishop of Tuam, a steady supporter of evangelical principles and preaching.

† Brooks, in his Gazetteer, when enumerating the number of places of worship in Dublin, mentions "Bethesda Chapel as the Cathedral of the Methodists." Dr. Law, late Bishop of Elphin, a man of remarkably liberal feelings, once preached in the chapel for Mr. Walker.

fellows to the consideration of the great and leading doctrines on which the Reformation was built and the Church of England by law established. To Bethesda were added St. George's Church* and St. James's Chapel.†

In the year 1815 a new chapel was opened in the parish of St. Peter, attached to an asylum for blind females, on a plan similar to those in London, Liverpool, and Bristol. The old theatre, which was of considerable extent, underwent a thorough repair, and was neatly fitted up as a place of worship, capable of accommodating a very numerous congregation. It was opened by the Rev. John Crosthwaite, chaplain to the institution, with a sermon on these words—"Thy kingdom come." The civic authorities of the city attended, and every part of this spacious edifice was crowded with serious and attentive hearers, who appeared to receive the Word of God with gladness. The light of divine truth soon burst forth from the Magdalen and St. George's Chapel.‡ In the latter, the Rev. John Barker and the Rev. William White put the lip to the Gospel trumpet; and in other places in the city, the sound of salvation through a dying Redeemer was frequently heard.

We have already seen an abundant harvest produced by the seed which the venerable Countess was the instrument of casting into the Gospel field; and with earnest hope and joyful expectations we look for a yet more abundant crop, when we shall see the bright beams of truth piercing through the clouds of darkness, and the Sun of Righteousness arising, with healing on his wings, on this land of superstition and error.

Ye men of God!—*ye ministers in the Connexion of the venerable Countess of Huntingdon!*—animated by a feeling sense of divine truth, and a fervent desire for the salvation of immortal

* The rector of St. George's is the Rev. William Burke, brother-in-law of the Bishop of Kilmore, and nephew of the late Right Hon. Henry Grattan.

† The rector of this parish was the Hon. and Rev. Edward Wingfield, son of Richard, fourth Viscount Powerscourt, and grandson of John, first Earl of Clanwilliam. He married Louisa-Joan, daughter of the Hon. George Jocelyn, and niece of the late Earl of Roden. Mr. Wingfield, and also his brother, the late Lord Powerscourt, who died August the 9th, 1823, brother-in-law of the present Earl of Roden, were awakened about the same period. He was taken, in the midst of usefulness, to his glorious rest in the paradise of God, in the year 1825. Lord Powerscourt departed this life, with a blooming prospect of a better, August 9, 1823, aged 33. His lordship's first wife, sister to the present Earl of Roden, was an eminently pious woman. A funeral sermon, preached on the occasion of her death, in 1822, by the Rev. Robert Daly (son of Lady Harriet Daly), vicar of Powerscourt, contains an interesting account of her ladyship.

‡ This ancient place of worship was originally the old parish church, and commonly called "Little George's Church." It was shut up for some years, but was re-opened by the above named clergyman, now advanced in years, who had received the truth in the love of it at Bethesda Chapel.

souls, redeemed by the same price as your own, communicate to the perishing millions in Ireland that same Gospel which you have yourselves embraced, and which your noble patroness exerted every faculty and strained every nerve to promulgate. Few, comparatively, in that unhappy country have yet enjoyed its light or felt its influence. Darkness still covers a great portion of that land, and gross darkness the majority of the people. Multitudes there are who "know not God, and obey not his Gospel;" on whom no beam of the Sun of Righteousness hath risen, with healing on his wings. Ye who sigh for the abominations daily committed in that country—who feel the religion of Jesus essential to life and hope—who experience the constrainings of divine charity—press forward to their service! Should you fail of success, the very attempt will be noble—should you succeed, glorious. And why not succeed? when "the shout of a King is still among you," and he, "the King eternal, immortal, invisible—the only wise God, our Saviour?" Hath he not promised "to be with you always, even to the end of the world!" Harken then to the voice of the great Leader and Commander, who yet speaketh from heaven—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature:"—"he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Conference of 1770—Mr. Wesley's Minutes of Conference—Protest against them by Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley—Conference of 1771—Mr. Wesley's Declaration—Considered a Recantation—Mr. Fletcher's Vindication—Mr. Shirley's Narrative—Controversy.

IN the year 1770 a controversy of considerable extent arose among the Calvinistic and Arminian Methodists, occasioned by the publication of the doctrinal parts of the minutes of the twenty-seventh Conference of the preachers in connexion with Mr. Wesley. Certain obnoxious propositions inserted in the minutes of this year gave great offence to the followers of the apostolic Whitefield, Lady Huntingdon, and the whole host of

Calvinistic Methodists. As to the effects of this controversy, but few of them can be contemplated with pleasure. Yet a more accurate statement of the doctrines which have been the subject of debate is a benefit usually resulting from theological warfare, and it was the fruit of this bitter and tedious contest. But by far too manifest were the evil consequences resulting from the dispute. The spirit displayed by the polemics, and their perseverance in contention during the space of six years, in opposition to the most earnest entreaties to desist from strife, cannot be mentioned with too strongly-marked disapprobation. Many there were, indeed, both Calvinistic and Arminian Methodists, who kept aloof from controversy and its feverish heat, and preserved both their hearts and lips from the unhal- lowed warfare. At the same time, there were but too many on each side, both ministers and private Christians, who drank deeply of the foaming cup of controversy, and felt its intoxica- ting powers to the injury both of themselves and others. While those who, in the midst of the noise, preserved themselves from the dreadful contagion, are entitled to praise, let the men who engaged in it so keenly and so long, from the pulpit or from the press, whether Calvinists or Arminians, bear that severity of reprehension which their conduct merits. May the beacon, which the writers in this controversy erected, be seen, and the dangerous quicksands avoided by all their successors from age to age !

For some years prior to the controversy it became evident to Mr. Wesley and many of his friends that he was daily declining in the estimation of Lady Huntingdon, and consequently losing that influence which he ever delighted to exercise over all those with whom he had to do. The cause of this change may be traced in his letter to the pious and benevolent Vicar of Made- ley, dated Birmingham, March 20, 1768, and which we quote at length :—

“Dear Sir,—I was told yesterday that you are sick of the conversa- tion even of them who profess religion—that you find it quite unprofi- table, if not hurtful, to converse with them three or four hours together, and are sometimes almost determined to shut yourself up, as the less evil of the two. I do not wonder at it at all ; especially considering with whom you have chiefly conversed for some time past, namely, the hearers of Mr. — and Mr. —. The conversing with them I have rarely found to be profitable to my soul. Rather it has damped my desires, and has cooled my resolutions, and I have commonly left them with a dry, dissipated spirit.

“And how can you expect it to be otherwise ? For do we not naturally catch their spirit with whom we converse ? And what spirit can we expect them to be of, considering the preaching they sit under ?

Some happy exceptions, I allow. But, in general, do men gather grapes off thorns? Do they gather the necessity of inward and outward self-devotion, of constant, universal self-denial, or of the patience of hope, or the labour of love, from the doctrine they hear? Do they gather from that amorous way of praying to Christ, or that luscious way of preaching his righteousness, any real holiness? I never found it so. On the contrary, I have found that even the precious doctrine of salvation by faith has need to be guarded with the greatest care, or those who hear it will slight both inward and outward holiness.

"I will go a step further. I seldom find it profitable to converse with any who are not athirst for full salvation; and who are not big with earnest expectation of receiving it every moment. Now you find none of these among the persons we are speaking of; but many on the contrary, who are in various ways, directly or indirectly, opposing this blessed work of God—the work, I mean, which God is carrying on through this kingdom by unlearned and plain men.

"You have, for some time, conversed a good deal with the genteel Methodists. Now it matters not a straw what doctrine they hear—whether they frequent the Lock or West-street, if they are as salt which has lost its savour—if they are conformed to the maxims, the spirit, the fashions, and customs of the world. Certainly then, if you converse much with such persons, you will return less a man than you were before. But were either the one or the other of ever so excellent a spirit, you conversed with them too long. One had need be an angel, not a man, to converse three or four hours at once to any good purpose. In the latter part of such a conversation we shall be in great danger of losing all the profit we had gained before.

"But have you not a remedy for all this in your hands? In order to converse profitably, may you not select a few persons who stand in awe of Him they love; persons who are vigorously working out their salvation: who are athirst for full redemption, and every moment expecting it, if not already enjoying it?

"Though it is true, these will generally be poor and mean, seldom possessed of either riches or learning, unless there be now and then one of higher rank: if you converse with such as these humbly and simply, an hour at a time, with earnest prayer for a blessing, you will not complain of the unprofitableness of conversation, or find any need of turning hermit. Do you not observe that all the lay-preachers who are engaged with me, are maintainers of general redemption? and it is undeniable that they are instrumental in saving souls. God is with them, and he works by them, and has done so for near these thirty years. Therefore, the opposing them is neither better nor worse than fighting against God.—I am, your ever affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."

This letter seems written *ex cathedra*: it has an air of episcopal direction or dictation, which, addressed to such a man as Fletcher, of Madeley, excited, and no wonder, a suspicion that Mr. Wesley regarded, not without jealousy, his reception among

the great, and his influence with the Countess of Huntingdon. That Mr. Wesley had warned Mr. Fletcher against his intercourse with persons of Calvinistic sentiments soon became known to Lady Huntingdon; and to this circumstance her Ladyship alludes in a letter, written at this time, in which she says:—

“ You will not be much surprised to hear that dear Mr. Fletcher has been severely reprimanded for endeavouring to maintain peace and unanimity in the household of God. His preaching so frequently for me and dear Mr. Whitefield, and mixing so much with those who have been sneeringly and contemptuously termed ‘the genteel Methodists,’ are considered great offences, and highly injurious to the cultivation of the life and spirit of the Gospel in the soul. The hearers of Mr. Madan and others are no better than worldlings; and all who hold the free-grace truths of the Gospel are pronounced unprofitable, conformed to this world, &c. Blessed be God, dear Fletcher has withstood this violent attack; and, with a heart overflowing with brotherly love, is determined, through the mighty grace of our divine Master, to persevere in the way in which he has gone, in every step of which he can trace the gracious leadings of Providence.”

Mr. Wesley began to regard her Ladyship under a new aspect. “Trevecca (he writes to Mr. Benson) is much more to Lady Huntingdon than Kingswood is to *me*. *I* mixes with everything. It is *my* College, *my* masters, *my* students. I do not speak so of this school.”

On the 7th of August, 1770, the Methodists in connexion with Mr. Wesley held their twenty-seventh annual conference in London. To raise a bulwark against Antinomianism, certain propositions respecting doctrine were agreed to, which will be found in the note below.*

These propositions gave great offence to the whole host of

* “Take heed to your doctrine.”

We said, in 1744, we have leaned too much towards Calvinism. Wherein?

1. With regard to *man's faithfulness*. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression, therefore we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert upon his authority, that if a man is not *faithful in the unrighteous mammon*, *God will not give him the true riches*.

2. With regard to *working for life*, which our Lord expressly commands us to do. *Labour* (Ergazesthe) literally, *work for the meat that endureth to everlasting life*. And, in fact, every believer, till he comes to glory, works *for*, as well as *from*, life.

3. We have received it as a maxim, that “a man is to do nothing in order to justification.” Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God should *cease from evil, and learn to do well*. So God himself teaches by the prophet Isaiah. Whosoever repents should *do works meet for repentance*. And if this is not *in order* to find favour, what does he do them for?

Once more review the whole affair:

1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God?

He that now believes in Christ, with a loving obedient heart.

Calvinistic Methodists. Lady Huntingdon and several other zealous persons, apprehending that the fundamental truths of the Gospel were struck at in these minutes of conference, and considering Mr. Wesley's consequence in the religious world, as standing at the head of such numerous societies, thought it incumbent on them to show their abhorrence of doctrines which they believed shook the very foundation of the Christian faith. Mr. Shirley publicly said, that he "deemed peace in such a case a shameful indolence, and silence no less than treachery." And Lady Huntingdon, resolved that no imputation of tacitly assenting to such doctrines should lie on her name, declared that whoever did not wholly disavow them should quit her College. Mr. Benson defended them, and Mr. Wesley writes to him—

"I am glad you had the courage to speak your mind on so critical an occasion. At all hazards do so still; only with all possible tenderness and respect. She is much devoted to God, and has a thousand valuable and amiable qualities. There is no great fear that I should be prejudiced against one whom I have intimately known for these thirty years. And I know what is in man, therefore I make large allowances for human weakness. But what you say is exactly the case: they *are* 'jealous of their *authority*.' Truly there is no cause—*Longe mea discrepat illi et mens et ratio*: I fear and shun, not desire authority of any kind, only when God lays that burden upon me I bear it for his and the people's sake."

This letter was written at Bristol, on the 5th of October, and

2. But who among those that never heard of Christ?

He that, according to the light he has, *feareth God and worketh righteousness*.

3. Is this the same with him that is sincere?

Nearly, if not quite.

4. Is not this salvation by works?

Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition*.

5. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years?

I am afraid, *about words* (namely, in some of the foregoing instances).

6. As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid: we are rewarded *according to our works*, yea, *because of our works*. How does this differ from, *for the sake of our works*. How differs this from *secundum merita operum*? which is no more than, *as our works deserve*. Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot.

7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions is drawn from matter of fact. God does, in fact, justify those who, by their own confession, neither *feared God*, nor *wrought righteousness*. Is this an exception to the general rule? It is a doubt whether God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure that the person in question never did fear God and work righteousness? His own thinking so is no proof. For we know how all that are convinced of sin undervalue themselves in every respect.

8. Does not talking, without the proper caution, of a *justified* or *sanctified* state, tend to mislead men? almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in *one moment*? Whereas we are every moment *pleasing* or *displeasing* to God, *according to our works*. According to the whole of our present inward tempers and outward behaviour?

soon after Mr. Wesley wrote to Lady Huntingdon in defence of the minutes; about the same time he wrote thus—

“For several years I had been deeply convinced that I had not done my duty with regard to that valuable woman: that I had not told her, what I was convinced no one else would dare to do, and what I knew she would bear from no other person, but *possibly* might hear from *me*. But being unwilling to give her pain, I put it off from time to time. At length I did not dare to delay any longer, lest death should call one of us hence; so I at once delivered my own soul, by telling her all that was in my heart. It was my ‘business,’ my proper business so to do; as none else either could or would do it. Neither did I take at all *too much* upon me. I know the office of a Christian minister. If she has not profited, it is her own fault, not mine; I have done my duty. I do not know that there was one charge in that letter that was unjust, unimportant, or exaggerated, any more than that against the doggrel hymns, which are equally an insult upon poetry and common sense.”

A month after he had written to her Ladyship, he re-perused his letter.

“This morning (says he) I have calmly and coolly read over my letter to Lady Huntingdon. I still believe every line of it is true; and, I am assured, I spoke the truth in love. It is a great pity for any one who wishes her well to skim over the wounds which are there searched. As long as she resents that office of true esteem, her grace can be but small.”*

Mr. Benson, besides defending Mr. Wesley, wrote on the baptism of the Holy Ghost, avowing sentiments which, according to Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley, were unscriptural; and she again avowed her determination that every Arminian should quit the College. Mr. Wesley, aware of this, still urged on Mr. Benson to adhere to the minutes of conference. He did so, and was dismissed.

It will be remembered that Mr. Fletcher recommended Mr. Benson to the Countess; to him the latter sent an account of his dismissal, and Mr. Fletcher was naturally affected. He had said, on the first appearance of the minutes of conference, that Mr. Wesley could not maintain such doctrine, and that he would

* The reader may be curious to know how Mr. Charles Wesley regarded the present conduct of his brother John to Lady Huntingdon. We have before us three letters of his, all dated from Bristol, and between the October and December of this year. The substance is, that John had not shown him the letter, that he doubted whether he could read it in the right temper, that he looked on it as one of Lady Huntingdon's trials, and that he, although preferring peace to all things, would not fail to speak to his brother roundly on the subject of that letter; and he asks her Ladyship if anything can be said in its defence to permit him to say it to her.

explain himself: but now, January 1, 1771, he writes to Lady Huntingdon, saying,—

“Mr. Benson made a very just defence when he said, he did hold with me the possibility of salvation for all men; that mercy is offered to all, and yet may be received or rejected. If this be what your Ladyship calls Mr. Wesley’s opinion, free-will, Arminianism, and if every Arminian must quit the College, I am actually discharged also. For, in my present view of things, I must hold that sentiment, if I believe that the Bible is true, and that God is love.

“For my part, I am no party-man. In the Lord I am your servant, and that of your every student. But I cannot give up the honour of being connected with my old friends, who, notwithstanding their failings, are entitled to my respect, gratitude, and assistance, could I occasionally give them any. Mr. Wesley shall always be welcome to my pulpit, and I shall gladly bear my testimony in his as well as Mr. Whitefield’s. But if your Ladyship forbid your students to preach for the one, and offer them to preach for the other at every turn; and if a master is discarded for believing that Christ died for all—then prejudice reigns; charity is cruelly wounded; and party spirit shouts, prevails, and triumphs.”

To Mr. Benson, he says:—

“If the procedure you mention be fact, and your letter be a fair account of the transactions and words relative to your discharge, a false step has been taken. If the plan of the college be overthrown, I have nothing more to say to it: the confined tool of any one party I never was, and never will be. Take care, my dear Sir, not to make matters worse than they are; and cast the mantle of forgiving love over circumstances that might injure the cause of God, so far as it is put into the hands of that eminent Lady, who hath so well deserved of the Church of Christ?”

Mr. Fletcher immediately visited Trevecca, and in a letter to Mr. Benson, dated March 22, 1771, said:—

“On my arrival at the College I found all very quiet, I fear through the enemy’s keeping his goods in peace. While I preached I found myself as much shackled as ever I was in my life, and, after private prayer, I concluded I was not in my place. The same day I resigned my office to my Lady, and, on Wednesday to the students and the Lord.....* Last Friday I left them all in peace, the servant, but no more the president of the College. My Lady behaved with great can-

* Mr. Shirley had proposed Mr. Benson’s “Baptism of the Holy Ghost” as a theme for discussion, and only two students spoke in its favour. He then sent a copy of the minutes of conference, and all were called on to write concerning them. This Mr. Fletcher did, and argued in their defence, after which he immediately resigned. His argument with Lady Huntingdon induced her to think better of Mr. Wesley, and she meditated a letter to him asking an explication of his minutes of conference. “This (says Mr. Benson in his Life of Fletcher) was never done either by her Ladyship or any one of her friends.” But Mr. Benson is in error; the letter was sent, and Mr. Wesley deigned not to

dour and condescension towards me ; but as for you, you are still out of her books, and are likely so to continue."

The controversy now commenced in earnest. Lady Huntingdon, by a widely-dispersed circular, invited the clergy of all denominations to assemble at Bristol, in August, to meet the Wesleyan conference, and compel them to revoke their heresies; or to sign a formal protest against them. This document was signed by Walter Shirley, and it contains, in a postscript, the names of the persons to whom the answer should be addressed, and an intimation that lodgings would be provided for the ministers who should accept the invitation. This circular was accompanied by copies, first, of the minutes of conference, (see page 235,) and, secondly, of the proposed protest, of which we subjoin a copy in the note below.*

This circular being issued, Lady Huntingdon again wrote to

reply, "judging (as he expressly says) that silence would be the best answer." Whether her Ladyship's letter was destroyed by Mr. Wesley, or suppressed by the gentlemen (Dr. Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Mr. Henry Moore,) to whom his papers were bequeathed, it is difficult to determine.

* The above minutes, given by Mr. John Wesley, in conference with others, we think ourselves obliged, in justice to our own consciences and in the sight of God, to disavow, believing such principles repugnant to Scripture and the whole plan of man's salvation under the new covenant ; as also to the foundation of that Church to which we profess to belong, and which is established in this kingdom, by its Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, as its Confession of Faith. In union with this and all other Protestant and reformed Churches, we hold *faith* alone in the Lord Jesus Christ for the sinner's justification, sanctification, righteousness, and complete redemption. And, that he, the only wise God our Saviour, is the first and the last, the author and finisher, the beginning and end of man's salvation : wholly by the sacrifice of himself to complete and perfect all those who believe. And that under this covenant of free grace for man, *He does grant* repentance, remission of sins, and meekness for glory, for the full and true salvation to eternal life ; and that all called good works are alike the act of his free grace to man through faith ; as a part of that covenant, which can sensibly contain nothing else suitable to the very nature of it. Being "created *anew* in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained, we should walk in them." Thus the works of faith, and those of a pharisee, through his own natural powers become separated, as St. James shows by the works he treats of, which are set forth in Abraham and Rahab as the most eminent instances the Holy Spirit has recorded of faith ; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. We altogether desire no other salvation than what is derived by this alone, believing all promises are vested in Jesus Christ, and by him, as his purchase to be dispensed, that so it may be all of grace by faith in himself alone, and works only as the manifestation and natural fruit of that faith which saves. Upon the most impartial survey of these minutes, we find from the beginning to the end one uniform and positive contradiction to these known principles and experience of the Protestant faith. And as all under the name of Methodists may, and are, too generally supposed to hold principles essentially the same ; we therefore desire to be considered as having no approbation of, or hand in, the establishment of such doctrines, either in whole or in part ; nor answerable in any degree, towards God or man, for the bad consequences so justly feared from them. Considering them as destruction to the very foundation of Christianity, and this distinct from all private judgments of men, who

Mr. Wesley on the subject of his propositions; his reply is dated London, June 19, 1771, and its object is to show, by reference to his sermons on "Salvation by Faith," published in 1738, "The Lord is our righteousness,"—a few years afterwards, and that on Mr. Whitefield's funeral, a few months before the date of his then present letter, that he had for thirty years maintained the same doctrine; that the religious world and many of his own children had arrayed themselves against him, following the example of his "eldest son" (Mr. Whitefield); that the then lines printed in August, were falsely held to contradict his previous doctrines; and he requests that they (the minutes of conference) may be interpreted by the sermon last referred to. The Lord, he says, continues to confirm his doctrine, notwithstanding weaknesses and contradictions which he could not deny. "Once I thought myself almost infallible; but, I bless God, I know myself better now;" and he concludes thus:—

"To be short, such as I am I love you well. You have one of the first places in my esteem and affection; and you once had some regard for me. But it cannot continue if it depends on my seeing with your eyes, or my being in no mistake. What if I were in as many errors as Mr. Law himself? If you were, I should love you still, provided your heart was still right with God. My dear friend, you seem not well to have learned yet the meaning of these words, which I desire to have continually written upon my heart, '*Whoever* doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother. I am, my dear Lady, your affectionate JOHN WESLEY."

Immediately on the receipt of this circular, Mr. Fletcher wrote to Lady Huntingdon, threatening to take the field in defence of the minutes, if the meditated attack on Mr. Wesley were not given up.* Lady Huntingdon, in her reply, after an affectionate

may be led into various opinions upon these essentials. While Mr. Wesley held these fundamental principles (though with some particular judgments of his own upon Scripture which wanted the approbation of many) we trusted the foundation stood sure with him, till, under his own hand, he has proved to all Christians, as well as all men of sense the contrary, by the clear and explicit manner in which he now avows his endeavour to establish salvation by works. We mean to enter into no controversy on the subject; but, separated from party bigotry and all personal prejudice to Mr. Wesley, the Conference, or his friends, do, as Christians, Protestants, and members of the Church of England, hereby most solemnly protest against the doctrines contained in these minutes. And as those who, with a single eye, stand out for what we believe to be the truth in Jesus, we appeal to Him for our honest and upright meaning in this, wishing to show Mr. Wesley and all others, every kindness due to them as men, while we are forced by conscience to disavow his principles.

* To Mr. Shirley Mr. Fletcher complains bitterly of the hurt done to Mr. Wesley's character by the circular. "Thousands of his friends you have grieved, offended, or staggered; and confirmed thousands of his enemies in their hard thoughts of him, and in their unjust contempt of his ministry."

remonstrance against Mr. Fletcher's reproaches, a tender reproof of his attachment to man rather than God, and a remark that he will have all the world with him, while she will be comparatively alone—says, she has no objection to his taking the field for Mr. Wesley, regarding all men as her fellow worms; and valuing neither learning nor greatness, she is content to be a witness for Jesus Christ, and to stand up against any and all who would rob him of honour, to arrogate any portion of salvation to themselves in right of their works. The whole letter breathes a spirit of burning zeal, and a piety ready to sacrifice love, friendship, and herself, in defence of the name of Jesus.

The trustees of Mr. Whitefield's chapels in London, Messrs. Keene, Hardy, and West, declined all part in the intended opposition. Their reply to the circular has not been discovered; but Lady Huntingdon, in answer to Mr. Keene, enlarges on the flagrancy of the minutes, and the necessity of opposing them; and rests her defence of the proposed manner, in the difficulty of spreading pamphlets among the poor, or securing their being read by the members of Mr. Wesley's conference, and on the hope that Mr. Wesley will be ready to receive and acknowledge any remonstrance set forth in a loving spirit. "If the mode then offends (says her Ladyship), and it is a small matter that it should do so, while so important a point was at stake, it would have showed much brotherly love as well as disinterestedness for that truth contended for, to have proposed some more excellent way."

Many persons objected to the dictatorial tone of the protest; and Mr. Wesley, more especially, remonstrated against the resolve, "to come in a body and to insist on a recantation." On the evening before the conference assembled, Lady Huntingdon wrote to Mr. Wesley, endeavouring to soften or remove this objection. "As Christians (she observes), we wish to retract what a more deliberate consideration might have prevented, as we would as little wish to defend even truth itself presumptuously, as we would submit servilely to deny it."

"It has been said (observes Mr. Shirley), that we have no right to intrude into your conference. We did not pretend to any civil or judicial right, any more than Paul had to call Peter to account; we did not mean to exercise any authority over you, or to treat you as our inferior, but as our equal, and engaged with us in the common cause of the revival of spiritual religion. However, it must be acknowledged upon the whole, that the circular letter was too hastily drawn up and improperly expressed, and therefore, for the offensive expressions in it, we desire we may be hereby understood to make every suitable submission to you, Sir, and the gentlemen of the conference; and I

cannot but wish, most earnestly, that this recantation of the circular letter may prevail as an example for the recantation of the minutes."

To these letters no answer was returned, and on the morning of the conference Mr. Shirley wrote again to Mr. Wesley and the body, regretting that offence should have been given by the mode of the circular; and requesting to know by what other way, more agreeable or convenient to the conference, the protesting party might be admitted to make objections to the minutes of the conference of August 1770.*

The conference was convened at Bristol, on Tuesday, August 6th, 1771. The assembly was, on account of the circular letter, larger than usual; and on the 8th (Thursday), at ten in the morning, Mr. Shirley and about ten of his friends, were admitted, and a conversation of some two hours occurred. "All (says Mr. Fletcher) were pleased with Mr. Shirley's conduct, so much like a minister of the Prince of Peace, and a meek, humble, loving brother in the Gospel of Christ." Mr. Wesley drew up a declaration, which was acquiesced in by Mr. Shirley and his friends, who candidly acknowledged their too hasty conduct in judging his sentiments.

The original document now lies before us, in the hand-writing of Mr. Wesley, and with the signatures of the 53 preachers:—

"Bristol, August the 9th, 1771.

"Whereas the doctrinal points in the minutes of a conference held in London, August 7th, 1770, have been understood to favour justification by works—Now, we, the Rev. John Wesley, and others assembled in conference, do declare that we had no such meaning, and that we abhor the doctrine of justification by works as a most perilous and abominable doctrine. And as the said minutes are not sufficiently guarded in the way they are expressed, we hereby solemnly declare in the sight of God, that we have no trust or confidence but in the alone merits of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for justification or salvation, either in life, death, or the day of judgment. And though

* Her Ladyship wrote to Mr. Thornton, enclosing copies of the minutes of conference, of the protest, and of her letter to Mr. Wesley, showing what pains had been taken to remove the first objection, that of an arbitrary mode of acting, and of her resolve to remove the second charge, that of *her* leading the opposition, by abstaining from presenting herself at the conference, unless summoned. She complains of the falling off of those who promised support, and, indeed, first made the proposal to her. "Four only (she says) act with coolness and firmness in co-operation with me. I find (she adds), an old monk in France has declared these minutes to be the Pelagian heresy, and that the Church of Rome was nearer to the Church of England than the author of these minutes."

no one is a real Christian believer (and consequently cannot be saved), who doth not good works when there is time and opportunity, yet our works have no part in meriting or purchasing our justification, from first to last, either in whole or in part.

John Wesley	John Olivers	William Whiteaker
Joseph Cownley	Samuel Wells	Edward Slater
J. Helton	Joseph Benson	John Poole
Thomas Rankin	James Clough	Thomas Potter
John Easton	Martin Rodda	Jasper Winscorn
Daniel Bunsted	John Duncan	Thomas Twinny
John Pawson	Francis Walker	Jeremiah Robertshaw
Alexander Mather	William Barker	Samuel Tooth
Joseph Thompson	George Shadford	John Magor
James Dempster	William Pitt	Matthew Mayer
Thomas Westell	Richard Bourke	Richard Caddick
Barnabas Thomas	Jonathan Crowle	Christopher Watkin
Joseph Guilford	James Parfett	Thomas Eden
J. Cotty	Benjamin Rhodes	Edward Bolton
John Furz	Thomas Hanson	George Hudson
John Goodwin	John Murray	James Nind
James Glasbrook	Richard Seed	William Winbe
Thomas Taylor	Richard Andrews	Thomas Brisco.

At the request of Mr. Wesley, Mr. Fletcher prepared a vindication of the doctrines contained in the minutes, in five letters, addressed to Mr. Shirley. The manuscript was finished on the 29th of July, and immediately presented to Mr. Wesley to publish or suppress, as he might think proper. This manuscript was in Mr. Wesley's hands when he drew up and signed the above declaration; but, strange and unaccountably contradictory as it may appear, on his leaving Bristol, for Wales, on Monday the 12th of August, he committed Mr. Fletcher's vindication of the minutes to the press, and left directions that they should be published with all imaginable despatch!

Mr. Fletcher no sooner heard of the declaration and Mr. Shirley's noble conduct, than he felt the utmost anxiety to suppress the publication; he wrote to Mr. Ireland, *his* friend and Mr. Shirley's, a letter, full of admiration of the latter, and of earnest entreaty to suppress the vindication of the minutes, in which Mr. Shirley had been freely dealt with. Mr. Ireland immediately applied to the printer, who said he was willing but unauthorized to delay the publication. To the stewards of the Methodist Society in Bristol Mr. Ireland sent a copy of Mr. Fletcher's letter, and another copy he enclosed to Mr. Shirley; but all his friendly zeal was vain; and his efforts to make peace could not prevent the outburst of the war of controversy. Mr. Olivers, one of Mr. Wesley's preachers, a fiery-tempered over-zealous man, was entrusted with the publication. He had objected to the declaration, and had used bitter expressions against

the protest, and was too glad to publish Mr. Fletcher's arguments on a subject on which his own had been rejected. Mr. Shirley was unmoved; he wrote kindly to Mr. Fletcher, who as kindly acknowledged his letter.

Mr. Shirley now hastened to Trevecca, to consult her Ladyship; and Mr. Fletcher's vindication being published against his own wish, through the strange inconsistency of Mr. Wesley and the fiery zeal of Mr. Olivers, it became necessary to publish, on the part of Mr. Shirley, a narrative of the whole affair, with all the correspondence to which we have adverted, and including a letter written by Mr. Wesley to the Countess, after the conference, in which he says, "Till Mr. Fletcher's printed letters are answered, I must think everything spoken against these minutes is totally destructive of his (Christ's) honour, and a palpable affront to him, both as our Prophet and Priest, but more especially as the King of his people." This letter reached Lady Huntingdon on the 19th of August, and on the 29th she wrote to Mr. Shirley that she could no way explain Mr. Wesley's letter, except by "attacking his integrity or suspecting that his judgment is impaired;" and she recommended to Mr. Shirley the publication of the narrative of facts and the letters. About the beginning of September, Mr. Shirley wrote to Mr. Fletcher, announcing this intended publication, and Mr. Fletcher replies, "I am not averse, at all, Sir, to your publishing the passages you mention, out of my letters to Mr. Ireland. They show my peculiar love and respect for you, which I shall at all times think an honour, and, at this juncture, shall feel a peculiar pleasure in seeing proclaimed to the world." If the letter be friendly, he adds, and printed in the same size with his vindication, he will take copies to the amount of ten pounds, and will use his best means to circulate them with his vindication, to show the world that they urge a loving war. But he is not the less zealous in Mr. Wesley's defence: he regards the publication of his pamphlet as a necessary evil, and hopes good will come of it; and declares, that as the minutes were necessary to prevent the spread of Antinomianism, so the vindication was justified by the wide-spread abuse of Mr. Wesley. Mr. Shirley's narrative appeared, and Mr. Wesley's friends were shocked to find his minutes described as *an attack upon the foundation of our hope*. Mr. Fletcher was again summoned to the rescue, and he published "A Second Check to Antinomianism," in three letters to the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Shirley. That Mr. Shirley construed the declaration as a recantation of the minutes of conference, greatly offended Mr. Wesley's friends; but Mr. Fletcher did not succeed in disproving it. After the

publication of this "Second Check," the Countess of Huntingdon wrote to Mr. Fletcher complaining of an unfair account of a conversation between them when her Ladyship first showed Mr. Wesley's minutes to Mr. Fletcher. In his reply he uses these remarkable words:—

"Appearances are against me, I confess; yet, I honestly acknowledge, that when I took up my pen in vindication of Mr. Wesley's sentiments, it never entered my heart that my doing so would have separated me from those whom I love and honour, and shall always highly esteem. Would to God I had never done it! To your Ladyship it has caused incalculable pain and unhappiness, and my conscience hath often stung me with bitter and sharp-cutting reproaches."

In 1772, Sir R. Hill entered the field for the Calvinists, in five letters addressed to Mr. Fletcher. This produced "A Third Check to Antinomianism," in a letter addressed to the author of *Pietas Oxoniensis*. The controversy raged: as the minds of men grew heated their hearts became more alienated and their recrimination more fierce. Sir Richard published six more letters at the end of the year, and his brother Rowland published several pamphlets on the Calvinistic side. Acrimonious epithets and intemperate expressions were of course mixed with the argument in so long and important a controversy, and the enemies of the Church rejoiced. "Logica Genevensis; or a Fourth Check to Antinomianism," addressed to Sir Richard and to Mr. Rowland Hill, appeared from the pen of Mr. Fletcher. The Rev. Walter Sellon, of Buldon, and Mr. Olivers, took his side. In 1773, Sir R. Hill published his "Finishing Stroke," and Mr. Beveridge his "Christian World Unmasked." Mr. Fletcher replied, Sir Rowland retorted, and Augustus Toplady, vicar of Broad Hembury, rushed to the Calvinistic banner. His "More Work for John Wesley" was the ablest pamphlet that Mr. Fletcher had to encounter; but he met it ably: and after several attacks and defences on either side, Mr. Fletcher wound up the controversy with an exhortation to love and peace, which ought to outlive all his polemics. Mr. Thornton and Mr. Ireland were in the meantime receiving the ministers of both sides, and labouring to reconcile them. Through their means a meeting was arranged between Mr. Fletcher and the Countess of Huntingdon, and to her Ladyship he dedicated his "Essay on Truth; or, a Rational Vindication of the Doctrine of Salvation by Faith." He was now seriously ill, and returned to Stoke-Newington, to his friends, the Greenwoods, where he was visited by many exalted persons, and by several of his opponents. There it was said of him, "I went

to see a man with one foot in the grave, but I found a man with one foot in heaven."

During the latter part of the year 1774, and the beginning of the year 1775, the controversy appears to have been suspended by the awful disputes between Great Britain and her Colonies, which became so hot, and threatened such dreadful calamities to both countries, that the attention even of religious minds was generally turned from every other controversy to that alone.

From a sense of duty to their King and country, as well as to the Church of God, both in England and America, Mr. Wesley, Mr. Fletcher, and others, began to employ their pens on political subjects. After Mr. Fletcher had published two or three small political pieces, in reference to our contest with the Americans, one of them was sent to Lord Dartmouth. His Lordship took it to the Lord Chancellor, and the Lord Chancellor handed it to the King. A person was immediately commissioned to ask Mr. Fletcher whether any preferment in the Church would be acceptable? or whether he (the Chancellor) could do him any service? He answered, "I want nothing, but more grace."

In the year 1775, Mr. Toplady opened the campaign by publishing his celebrated work, entitled "Historic Proof of the Calvinism of the Church of England," which was answered by Mr. Sellon, who was also a minister of the Church Establishment, and a *protégée* of the Huntingdon family. Shortly after his "Sermon on Free Will and Merit," and his "Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity asserted," in answer to Mr. Wesley's tract on that subject, came from the press, Mr. Fletcher published his "Answer to Mr. Toplady's Vindication of the Decrees," "A Reply to the Principal Arguments by which the Calvinists and Fatalists support the Doctrine of Absolute Necessity," and "Remarks on Mr. Toplady's Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity." The whole field of controversy between Calvinism and Arminianism was traversed over and over again by these adroit polemics. The fires of contention kindled anew; and the champions on both sides engaged in the theological warfare with renewed vigour.*

Her Ladyship, who felt towards her students like a nursing mother for her sons, wrote an affectionate remonstrance to Mr. Fletcher, which concludes thus:—

"However hard to my heart I feel it that others should thus suffer

* During the heat of this warfare, it was reported to Lady Huntingdon, on good authority, that Mr. Fletcher had spoken disrespectfully of the students at Trevecca.

through me, it must become a part of that cross I wish only more submissively to carry a little longer, and for my Great Master's sake, glory in this tribulation also. Should anything more be wanting for my excuse to you on this occasion, place all you yourself would add to my account, willingly becoming your debtor, as I must still remain for many instances of your former friendship, which I hope never to lose sight of, though through a medium now which makes it to be so little understood why on your part it ever should have existed for me. I am your sincere friend, &c.

"S. HUNTINGDON."

Numerous pamphlets now appeared on both sides, and to the arguments contained in them were added the keenest ridicule and the strongest possible invective. "Farrago double distilled"—"An old Fox tarred and feathered"—"Pope John," &c., were among the titles of these passionate productions. Mr. Rowland Hill excused his severity, by quoting, among other epithets applied by the Messrs. Wesley to the Calvinists, the titles of "Devil factors"—"Satan's synagogue"—"Children of the old roaring hellish murderer who believed his lie"—"Advocates for sin"—"Witnesses for the Father of lies"—"Blasphemers"—"Satan-sent preachers"—"Devils"—"Liars"—"Fiends." Was Mr. Wesley's biographer, Watson, aware of these expressions, when he described the pamphlets on Mr. Wesley's side, as "models of temper, and calm but occasionally powerful reproving?" It has been said that the acid was all on one side, but was this so, when Mr. Wesley thus summed up the doctrine of Mr. Toplady's pamphlet on predestination?—"The sum of all this is: one in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader, believe this or be damned. Witness my hand,

A. T."

Now, did Lady Huntingdon and her preachers hold any such doctrine as this? Never did persons more *freely* invite *all* to come to Christ, than the ministers she employed; nor have any preachers, since the days of the apostles, been more practical in their doctrines or holier in their lives. It is only to be lamented that the combatants did not *meet* instead of *writing*. They were inflamed by constant misrepresentations, which lost nothing in passing from one to another. When they did meet, their mutual religion generally awakened a common love towards each other. When Mr. Toplady saw Olivers, one of his most acute antagonists, whom he had ridiculed in verse and attacked in prose, all his anger seemed to cease. "To say the truth (he writes), I am glad I saw Mr. Olivers, for he appears to be a person of stronger sense and better behaviour than I had imagined." Mr. Rowland Hill, with admirable candour, says

of his own writings, "a softer style and spirit would better have become me;" and this would have undoubtedly been the case, had he met and conversed with his opponents. He also wrote to London and Bristol to forbid the sale of one of his severest publications, part of which, addressed *privately* to a friend, had been printed without his consent. "Thus (says he) have I done my utmost to prevent the evil that might arise from any wrong touches of the ark of God."

The cause was the Lord's, but the armour in which both parties came into the field was not selected from the panoply of light. They, therefore, turned their weapons against each other, and forgot for a period the effect of such a spectacle on the enemies of their common salvation. Let the case be fairly stated, the faults on both sides be acknowledged, and may the remembrance of them serve as a warning to those who treat upon religious differences! Let us give credit to both parties for integrity of principle; and let Calvinist and Arminian join in one common acknowledgment, that they never should have sought God by nature, had he not first sought them by grace; that the only way to eternal life is through the all-sufficient atonement of a dying Saviour; and the only evidence of our interest in his blood, a heart sanctified by his Spirit and a life dedicated to his glory.*

On a review of this memorable controversy, it is painful to reflect that scarcely ever was so important a subject discussed with such ill success. Both sides discovered towards certain truths feelings which did them honour; the one being jealous for divine sovereignty and grace, with human dependence; the other for infinite justice and holiness, with the moral agency of man. But they seem to have reserved their religion for their friends, and to have thought that any thing was lawful to an enemy. Forgetting that from erring man, the errors, as well as sins, of his brother, demand sorrow rather than anger, they let loose all the furies against their opponent's opinion. With whomsoever the victory might be supposed to rest, acquired by such weapon it could confer no glory.

* The author has placed in the hands of the publisher the whole of the voluminous correspondence on the subject of the conference, and the controversy between Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Fletcher, her Ladyship and Lady Glenorchy, and between the Countess and the sixty clergymen then employed by her. There are five letters from William Mason, Esq., of Rotherhithe, one from the Rev. David Edwards, a respectable dissenting minister of Ipswich, one from the Rev. John Brown, of Sheddington, &c.; but it is presumed that the review of the controversy given in the text, precludes the publication of these letters, except at the demand of the public: on the expression of which they may appear either in the form of an Appendix to the Memoirs or as a separate publication.

Where both parties deserve so much censure, with regard to their tempers, the comparative estimate of their delinquency is difficult, and the condemnation of the one implies no praise to the other. The Calvinists, however, were the most guilty; for Mr. Toplady bore away the palm of contempt and bitterness, evil surmises, and provoking speeches. To Mr. Wesley, indeed, must be attributed the guilt of letting loose the dogs of war; he commenced the dispute by publishing Mr. Fletcher's defence of the minutes, after having publicly drawn up and signed a *refutation* or *recantation* of the obnoxious principles which they contained; and his horrid appeal to all the devils in hell gave a sort of infernal tone to the controversy. In point of temper, Mr. Fletcher was of all the disputants, at once the best and the worst. Too much under the impression of the approaching judgment to indulge himself with the ribaldry, sneers, and contempt, in which others seemed to glory, he discovered all the seriousness of Saul of Tarsus in his opposition to the Gospel, and, transported by that zeal which is not according to knowledge, he is often very devoutly wicked, and almost blasphemous from a sense of duty. In argument, however, he stood alone on the Arminian side: for though Mr. Wesley was shrewd and perspicuous, excelling in that luminous simplicity of language which controversy demands, he soon turned from disputing with enemies to rule his votaries; and left Fletcher to dazzle with eloquence instead of reasoning, and to substitute tropes for arguments. If the corruscations of passion and ephemeral wit should go down to it, posterity would pronounce him too loquacious for a deep reasoner, and too impassioned to investigate duly the most profound and awful themes which can occupy the human understanding.

It is as painful as it is remarkable, that the true point on which the whole controversy turns was never brought to view. This could not be expected from the Arminians, whose cause it would have injured. But the Calvinists, by this neglect, betrayed a want of insight into their own system. The contest, concerning what God designed from eternity, must at last be decided by what he effects in time; for his actions are the annunciations of his decrees. As Mr. Wesley professed to admit that God was the author of conversion, that he gave the will its right direction, and sustained the religion which he first produced; when this admission is pursued to all its consequences, it proves all that Calvinism requires. Instead, however, of discussing this interesting question which lay within their reach, and tended to edification as it led them to look into their own hearts, the combatants pushed each other back into the ages of

eternity, to speculate upon the order of the thoughts which passed in the Infinite Mind.

Another singularity of this contest was, the difference of the tribunals to which the litigants appealed. The Arminians seem to have felt as gladiators exhibiting before the world, which must have been much confirmed in its native enmity to divine sovereignty and grace, by the misrepresentations of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher. The Church of Christ was the theatre in which the Calvinists sought applause; but they seemed not sufficiently solicitous whether that applause proceeded from the best or the worst part of the professors of religion. The Arminians gloried in the patronage of the *Monthly Review*, and Mr. Fletcher reproached Mr. Hill for appealing to the children of God. That was indeed more likely to be true which commended itself to those "who had tasted that the Lord is gracious," than that which suits the taste of "the carnal mind which is enmity against God;" but in appealing to the people of God, we should not forget that those who lay claim to this title without right are often the worst judges of truth and holiness.

The effect of the controversy was most pernicious. Without eliciting truth, or illustrating difficult texts, the combatants inflamed the spirit of party, and rendered the two bodies of Methodists, for several succeeding years, more hostile to each other than almost any other differing sects. Both parties were driven to extremes. The Calvinists not only shocked their opponents by saying things as strong, rather than as true, as possible, against Arminians; but they actually went to lengths which some of them afterwards condemned as the perversion of Calvinism; though others unhappily gloried in these extravagancies as the perfection of the Gospel: so that real Antinomianism became the pest of many Churches, and the scarecrow of the Arminians. These, in their turn, fled from Calvinism, with such haste, that they almost rushed into the arms of a mystical deism; for though Mr. Fletcher, as he advanced towards the close of the controversy, felt as a Christian on the verge of eternity, and dropped some healing antidotes to the controversial venom, Mr. Wesley seemed only intent on following up his position, that "we are going too far towards Calvinism."

CHAPTER XL.

American Affairs—Rev. Cornelius Winter—Refused Ordination for the Orphan House—Rev. John Zubley—Governor Wright—Bishop of London—Letters from the Hon. Mr. Habersham—Mr. Whitefield's Will—Great Meeting in Wales—Mission to America—Circular Notice from Lady Huntingdon—Letters to the Hon. James Habersham, from Lady Huntingdon—Letter to Mr. Wright and Mr. Crane—Services at Trevecca—Designation of the Missionaries in London—Mr. Piercy preaches on Tower-hill—Rev. Charles Stuart Eccles—Arrival of the Missionaries at the Orphan House.

LADY HUNTINGDON now stood in a very high and responsible situation. By the will of Mr. Whitefield she became the sole proprietor of very considerable possessions in America, which, with the numerous chapels erected in various parts of the kingdom, and the College that her boundless liberality had reared, greatly increased her labours and her cares. Impressed with the necessity of depending more simply and entirely upon the revelation of "the arm of the Lord," she recommended to the several congregations under her patronage to unite, both in public and private, in earnestly supplicating the Great Head of the Church for a copious outpouring of his Spirit upon ministers and people. Tuesday the first, and Tuesday the fifteenth of January, 1771, were appointed for the solemn purpose, and were observed with great strictness throughout her Ladyship's connexion.

The late Rev. Cornelius Winter had now returned from America with Mr. Whitefield's will,* and was the bearer of

* The respect showed to the memory of Mr. Whitefield by the inhabitants of the province of Georgia, was very great, and gratifying to the feelings of Mr. Winter, who had accompanied him thither in order to instruct the poor negroes in the settlement. All the black cloth in the stores was bought up; the pulpit and desks of the church, the branches, the organ-loft, the pews of the governor and council were covered with black. The governor and council in deep mourning, convened at the state-house, and went in procession to church, and were received by the organ playing a funeral dirge. The funeral sermons were preached, one by Mr. Ellington, and the other by the Rev. John Joachim Zubley, first minister of the Presbyterian Church at Savannah. He originally came from Switzerland, and took the charge of this church in 1760. He preached to an English and German congregation, and sometimes also he preached in French. He was a member of the provincial congress, in 1775, but, as he differed in opinion from his fellow-citizens with respect to the independence of the United States, he incurred their displeasure, and his subsequent days were embittered. He was a man of great learning, of a vigorous and penetrating mind, and of a heart moulded into the Christian spirit. He published a sermon

letters from his Excellency Governor Wright and Mr. Frink, the rector of Savannah, addressed to the Bishop of London, recommending Mr. Winter for episcopal ordination.* To strengthen their testimonials and prevent any obstacle, President Habersham wrote to the Rev. Brian Broughton, rector of Allhallows, Lombard-street, secretary to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and one of the original Methodists at Oxford.

Mr. Winter waited on the Bishop of London, who, after reading the testimonials, sent for him into his room. He said, "You have been over to America as a preacher?" Mr. Winter answered, "No, as a catechist." "But," said his Lordship, "you have preached?" Mr. Winter replied, "I have attempted to explain the Scriptures to the negroes, and the curiosity of some people have excited them to hear." "It was illegal," said the Bishop; "you had no right to do so." As Mr. Winter stood before the Bishop as a candidate, and not as a casuist to defend his conduct, he judged it prudent to be silent.

"How came you over to America?" asked his Lordship. "On purpose to see if I could be of any service to the negroes," replied Mr. Winter. "Then," said the Bishop, "you went over with Mr. Whitefield? I suppose you have been connected with him, and have drank deep into his sentiments." To which Mr. Winter replied, "I hope, my Lord, I shall be enabled to give a degree of satisfaction upon examination." The Bishop told him

on the value of that faith, without which it is impossible to please God, in 1772—a funeral sermon—and one on American affairs. He occasionally corresponded with Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Whitefield; and died at Savannah, in July 1781.

* At a meeting of the trustees upon the occasion of Mr. Winter's return to England, the following address was agreed upon to Sir James Wright, Governor of Georgia.

The Executors of the Rev. Mr. Zulubuhler to Governor Wright.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the subscribers, executors, and trustees of the last will and testament of the late Rev. Mr. Zulubuhler, having, agreeably to the said will, employed Mr. Cornelius Winter as a catechist to instruct the negroes on the plantation of the deceased, for a year past, and he having given us entire satisfaction in the discharge of his duty, and behaved irreproachably in all respects in his religious and moral character, beg leave to recommend him to your Excellency as a person, in our opinion, properly qualified to receive holy orders; and therefore we request your Excellency will be pleased to recommend him to the Lord Bishop of London for ordination, that he may thereby be enabled fully to comply with the intention of the testator, by performing the ministerial offices required by his will. We are with great respect, your Excellency's most obedient servants,

FRANCIS HARRIS,
JAMES READ,
JOHN SMITH,
JOSEPH CLAY,
NOBLE WILLIAM JONES.

Savannah, Georgia, Nov. 22; 1770.

he would do nothing for him of himself, that it was always usual for missionaries to apply to him through the Society; that they should meet at Bow Church, on the 15th instant, where he would be examined, and there would be an ordination the next week. From the manner in which his Lordship dismissed him, Mr. Winter formed some expectation of success. But to his surprise, after waiting in Bow Church till the Society was nearly broken up, Dr. Burton sent for him into the vestry, and informed him his business had been laid before the Society, who agreed to have nothing to do with it; neither could they recommend him to the Bishop of London, as he wanted no assistance from them. However all agreed if his Lordship of London were disposed to ordain Mr. Winter, they had no objection; but his Lordship replied he would have nothing to do with the American business except through the Society; and he added, that he was afraid the young gentleman had drank deep into Mr. Whitefield's doctrine.

After his rejection, Mr. Winter waited upon every gentleman whom he judged had any interest, and among the rest, upon Dr. Franklin, the kind and steady friend of Mr. Whitefield, and Lady Huntingdon, who engaged to use his exertions on his behalf. Mr. Winter was advised to write to the Bishop of London, and after his Lordship perused his letter, he sent for him and said, "I suppose you have heard what the Society have concluded on?" Mr. Winter replied, "My Lord, I have; and as it is a matter left to your Lordship, I hope you will determine it in my favour." But though he urged the necessity by repeated arguments, the only reply he made was, "I can do nothing in it." When Mr. Winter informed him he could not think of returning to America in his present circumstances, his Lordship said, "You must do as you please; and withal added, "Now Mr. Whitefield is dead, you want to throw yourself under our wing. We have an objection against ordaining any person brought up to business; but you have been a preacher with Mr. Whitefield, which is illegal." To each of these Mr. Winter made a reply in submission to his Lordship's judgment, but did not dwell upon them, remembering the circumstances in which he stood. Just as Mr. Winter shut the door on leaving the Bishop, he called to him, which led him to think the scale was turned, but he only said, "When you return to America let me know." To which Mr. Winter replied, "My lord, I cannot think of returning without ordination." Bowing his head, he said, "Very well;" and thus they parted till the judgment day.

The complete failure of Mr. Winter's mission was soon communicated to his numerous friends in America. The trustees

were really sorry for his disappointment, but the refusal of the Bishop did not give them half so much uneasiness on his account as to see that a door was so shut against them. In Mr. Clay's answer to Mr. Winter, he says—

“Unless God, in his infinite mercy and goodness, uses some extra means in our favour, this land, (I may say, land of darkness and ignorance, more particularly if applied relative to the people in the back woods, many of whom I dare say never saw a Bible in their lives, or ever heard a Gospel sermon, and most of whom can neither write nor read), must be left without teachers, at least, of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the true and only Saviour of sinners, unless we encourage those who are dissenters from the Established Church, which, for my part, I have not the least objection to, provided we cannot get others. But I must say, that I think, of two men, equally qualified for the ministry, the one of the Established Church, and the other a dissenter from the Church, that the former would be more favourably received, I mean in this country; and for which reason, I would rather wish to see episcopal ministers among us. What can our dignitaries think—or really one would rather ask, do they think at all? One would imagine, if we were to judge on this side, from those they generally send among us as ministers, that their only care was to see that they were not religious men. It is surprising that there is not one among them who would venture to ordain such persons as they should have reason to think would prove faithful teachers. This is, as I presume, for fear of the scoffs of their brethren. Much might be said upon this head, but perhaps it may be more prudent to be silent.”

Mr. Habersham said, in a letter to Mr. Winter:—

“Perhaps few of your friends think themselves more interested in your success in getting ordination, than myself, and I think I may also truly say, that few, if any, of your friends, have a higher esteem or more real friendship for your person than I have, and therefore your disappointment has given me much concern, and I cannot help viewing it as a frown of Divine Providence.

“I had raised my expectations of seeing a church of Africans, and had fixed on you as the instrument, under God, to bring it about, and hoped that you would have been the happy man to have presented many of them to your Father, and to their Father, with a ‘Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me.’ You know there are a few, and of no inconsiderable property, who would be glad to have their black servants become fellow-heirs with them, and partakers of the inheritance undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Is it then possible that the guardians and fathers of our excellent Church should refuse orders to a man every way qualified, amply provided for, unexceptional in his moral character, and heartily desirous from the best motive, the love of God, to engage in and promote so arduous, so painful, and difficult a work, as the conversion of those neglected and benighted people from, what shall I call it, prejudice or mistake? I could say more, but I forbear, not doubting but God will vindicate his

own cause. I have by this conveyance written to good Lady Huntingdon, and have desired her to have some conversation with you on this subject, as you are circumstantially acquainted with the state and provision made for the mission^{here}; and in case you do not see your way clear, to return to us; a kind Providence may possibly point out some person properly qualified, agreeably to the will of the donor, to succeed you, who, I may venture to say, will be heartily received by those entrusted with the execution of it."

The refusal of the Bishop of London to ordain Mr. Winter, and the existing state of the Orphan-house, became the cause of much embarrassment to Lady Huntingdon. Mr. Berridge, in a letter to her Ladyship, in May, 1771, says, "Mr. Winter, who went to Georgia with Mr. Whitefield, and returned last Christmas, called lately upon me, and acquainted me with the state of the Orphan-house. He says there are but few Orphans in the house, and no symptoms of grace in any. Mr. Wright has the whole management of the house, who, according to my little knowledge of him, seems neither to have zeal nor grace enough for the work. Mr. Whitefield, when at Georgia, made a sumptuous feast on a Sunday, for all the better dressed people, intending to renew this every year by way of commemoration; but I hope you will put a stop to this guttling business. I wish the Orphan-house may not soon become a mere Blue-coat Hospital and Grammar-school. If Mr. Fletcher could go to Georgia for a year, things might be on a better footing. Indeed, I never could relish Mr. Wright; he seems a mere cabinet-maker, without godliness. Mr. Winter, who gave me this intelligence, is a zealous, prudent, godly youth, and is now settled at Bristol, in the room of Mr. Adams, so that you may easily obtain all needful intelligence from him."

We have already seen the zeal and usefulness of the venerable Countess in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and it devolves on her biographer now to record the extension of her Christian philanthropy towards other regions. Her's was a missionary zeal that burned with unabated energy for the salvation of mankind, communicating its hallowed fire to other hearts, and urging them to deeds of glory and renown.

In the year 1772, her Ladyship having brought in all heirs-at-law, and secured by the kind assistance of Sir James Wright, Baronet,* Governor of Georgia, and the Hon. James Habers-

* Sir James was Attorney-General, Chief Justice, and Governor of the Province of Georgia. He was created a baronet in 1772. Lady Wright, who was drowned on her voyage to England, was only daughter and heiress of Captain Maidman of the army. Sir James died in 1786, and was succeeded by his eldest son, who married a daughter of John Smith, Esq., some time Governor of South

ham,* and settled all things to the satisfaction of her own mind and that of all Mr. Whitefield's friends, formed the determination of sending over a President and Master for the Orphan-house, with such students as were willing to devote themselves to the service of the heathen.

Mr. Habersham was appointed by Mr. Whitefield as executor of his affairs in the Province of Georgia; which office he fulfilled perfectly to the satisfaction of Lady Huntingdon, and with high honour to himself. Prior to the execution of his will,† Mr. Whitefield conversed with Mr. Winter upon the future disposal of the Orphan-house. "I told him," says Mr. Winter, "I thought he should resign it to the Government of the Province, giving it as my reason, that though Lady Huntingdon should have it in case of his death, she would not be able to preserve the life of religion in it as he supposed." The work of God usually goes on in a way contrary to the order prescribed by man. Mr. Whitefield had taken such steps as certainly raised the expectation of the Governor and council; and they had reason to think it would be an institution under their direction.

Carolina, but dying without issue, in 1816, the title reverted to his grand-nephew, James Alexander Wright, the present baronet, of South Carolina.

* Mr. Habersham was an eminent merchant at Savannah, and early in life was connected with the first Methodists at Oxford, whilst a student at the University. For many years he was the faithful friend and adviser of Mr. Whitefield, with whom he maintained a constant correspondence to the day of his death. He was a man of piety, and held in much esteem for his honourable and upright character. His views of divine truth had their genuine influence upon his temper and conduct to an unusual extent. Few have experienced such uninterrupted peace of mind through life, or such strong support in death. He died August 29, 1775, leaving a son, Joseph Habersham, Esq., Postmaster General of the United States, who likewise afterwards corresponded with Lady Huntingdon on her affairs in Georgia. He died November, 1815.

† Mr. Whitefield's will was dated March 22, 1770, and the bequest made in the following manner:—

"In respect to my American concerns, which I have engaged in simply and solely for His great name's sake, I leave that building, commonly called the Orphan-house, at Bethesda, in the province of Georgia, together with all the other buildings lately erected thereon; and likewise all other buildings, lands, negroes, books, furniture, and every other thing whatsoever, which I now stand possessed of, in the province of Georgia aforesaid, to that elect lady, that mother in Israel, that mirror of true and undefiled religion, the Right Hon. Selina, Countess Dowager of Huntingdon: desiring that as soon as may be after my decease, the plan of the intended Orphan-house, Bethesda College, may be prosecuted, if not practicable or eligible to pursue the present plan of the Orphan-house Academy on its old foundation and usual channel; but if her Ladyship should be called to enter her glorious rest before my decease, I bequeath all the buildings, lands, negroes, and every thing before mentioned, which I now stand possessed of in the Province of Georgia aforesaid, to my dear fellow-traveller and faithful invariable friend, the Hon. James Habersham, President of his Majesty's Honourable Council: and should he survive her Ladyship, I earnestly recommend him as the most proper person to succeed her Ladyship, or to act for her during her Ladyship's life-time in the Orphan-house Academy."

Some disappointment was felt when his will was made known; but most of the religious people in the colony felt satisfied that the trust was reposed in good hands; and a letter from Lady Huntington to the Governor and Council reconciled many to the disposition in her favour.

Hitherto, Lady Huntington had confined her exertions to Great Britain; and it was the supreme delight of her soul to see the pleasure of the Lord prospering in a happy revival of spiritual religion. By the persevering zeal of those devoted men who laboured with her, vast multitudes of the most ignorant and abandoned of mankind were recovered from the power of Satan unto God, many of whom now walk with him as dear children, adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour by a conversation such as becometh godliness; and thousands, departed in the faith, rest in his bosom. But now her attention was directed to America; and she embarked in the arduous undertaking with a confident assurance that, whatever retardments might make the heart sick with hope deferred, or whatever difficulties obstruct the execution of her efforts, in some succeeding generations the work would be done with efficacy; for the heathen are given to the Saviour for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession. Happy and honoured are those whom he deigns to employ as instruments in the accomplishment of his glorious designs!

All the students labouring in England, Wales, and Ireland, were now called into the College in Wales, to form the Mission to North America. A letter was addressed by her Ladyship to all the ministers and students in the Connexion, desiring them to be in Wales early in the month of October. This letter was accompanied by a circular notice to be read in all the congregations, and a request that the people would unite for prayer and fasting on Friday the ninth of October, the day appointed for the solemn dedication of those called to go to America.*

Her Ladyship wrote at large her views to Mr. Habersham,

* *Circular notice from the Countess of Huntingdon to all the Clergy and Students, and to all the Congregations, Managers, and Trustees of Chapels in connexion with her:—*

“The affairs in America being fully settled, Lady Huntington’s intention is to carry into execution that which she believes will most effectually be the means of promoting the knowledge of the Lord, not only in the Provinces of America, but also (by the intended measure,) a supply of missions will be provided to carry it into the back settlements and among the heathen nations. Believing this to be the Lord’s will for the Orphan House in Georgia, she proposes a meeting in Wales of all the principals in connexion with her, for this purpose, that the calls of such students as offer themselves for the help of the Lord may be examined; and also for the more effectually planning out the work in England, North and South Wales, and Ireland; and also to settle the College, by receiving or rejecting such new students as shall be offered. The

and, by the same conveyance, wrote her directions to Mr. Wright and Mr. Crane for every needful preparation for the reception of her family at the Orphan House, that nothing should be wanting on their parts to render the establishment of the president, master, and students, suitable to the character they have as belonging to the Countess of Huntingdon. We might here proceed to lay before the reader an account of the selection and dedication of the students destined as missionaries to North America, and the solemn services on that occasion at Lady Huntingdon's College in Wales, at Tottenham-court Chapel, and in the open air on Tower Hill—scenes which must have been singularly impressive, and particularly so in a day when Missionary Ordinations were not common, as they now are. The whole of the proceedings mark the spirit of the days of the Son of Man, and can scarcely be contemplated without exciting a prayer, that the mantle of the prophets of that period of divine power may rest on their descendants.

The students being thus called in from all parts of the kingdom, Lady Huntingdon left Bristol on Friday, October 2d, accompanied by Mr. Shirley, Mr. Piercy, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Wilson, &c., and arrived at Abergavenny in the evening, where they met six of the students, some from the College, to attend her Ladyship there, and others on their way from various places, to attend the meeting on the 9th. The next morning all set out for Trevecca, and were met on the road by several other students,* who accompanied her to the College, where they arrived at four o'clock on Saturday afternoon. The students in the establishment received them with the hymn—

“Welcome! welcome, blessed servants!”

Mr. Shirley prayed devoutly on their entrance. At dinner, the students sung—

“Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim.”

clergy intending to be present are the Hon.^d and Rev. Mr. Shirley, rector of Maryhill; the Rev. Mr. Glascott, rector of Hatterleigh, Devonshire; the Rev. Mr. Crosse, vicar of Bradford (and intended chaplain and master of the Orphan-house); and the Rev. Mr. Piercy, rector of St. Paul's, Charlestown, with all the students variously engaged from all parts, to be present on Wednesday, October 7th, at furthest—the Friday after being intended as a feast of dedication of all those called to go to America. She is obliged to desire it so soon, as a ship by the end of next month will be ready to sail and land them at Georgia, and the captain is the person she most wishes them to go by, from many advantages arising to them from him. As Lady Huntingdon supposes this the most important event of her whole life, so all that bear her any regard, in connexion with her, she must entreat to be present, and is bound to believe great blessings from the Lord Jesus Christ will descend upon all who are made willing to help her with their presence and their prayers.”

* Of their proceedings, the fullest details are before us; but to insert them would require a third volume of these Memoirs.

In the evening, one of the students preached. At supper, a hymn was sung, and was followed by prayers, the signal for retiring to rest. On Sunday, the first public service was commenced, and this was repeated every day for a fortnight.

On the 27th of October the missionaries embarked on board the vessel destined to convey them to America, and sailed from Blackwall to Gravesend. As the moment of their departure approached, the prayers of the thousands who felt themselves peculiarly interested in the arduous yet glorious undertaking, became more frequent and fervent than usual. Vast multitudes attended them to the river side; and, as soon as the boats conveyed them from the shore, a solemn and affecting scene presented itself. Every countenance was suffused with tears, hats and handkerchiefs were to be seen waving in every direction, bidding these servants of God farewell, and a multitude of prayers and wishes ascended as a cloud of incense to the great Head of the Church, recommending them to his merciful protection and care. Such a spirit of prayer and supplication was poured out upon the people of God at this interesting period as has seldom been remembered. Every heart was affected; and the impressions then made were attended with the most beneficial results. The missionaries embarked on board the vessel perfectly undismayed at the apparent dangers of the ocean, and deeply penetrated with a sense of the glorious cause in which they were engaged; and, to preserve on their minds a lively sense of the nature and importance of the missionary work, Lady Huntingdon planned several judicious regulations during the voyage. She recommended that there should be public service every day, in which all the students should engage by rotation; and that they should meet, at certain parts of every day, for the purpose of social prayer, and the strengthening each other's hands by mutually relating their Christian experiences, and reading such works as might be of important benefit to them in their arduous undertaking.*

As the vessel was not to put to sea for some days, Mr. Piercy returned to London, and on the following Sunday preached to

* The following lines were written on this interesting occasion by Mr. Shirley, and though *printed* at the time, few, comparatively, had an opportunity of seeing them. When the missionary ship, the *Duff*, sailed from England for the South Seas, this poem was published in the "Evangelical Magazine" for 1796:—

" Go, destined vessel, heav'nly freighted, go—
For, lo! the Lord's ambassadors are thine;
Faith sits at helm, and Hope attends the prow,
While thousands swell the sails with balmy pray'r.

an amazing congregation at Tottenham-court Chapel. His text was—"Peace I leave with you—my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you: let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." At six in the evening the worship was renewed at the Tabernacle, when he delivered a discourse to an immense multitude, which greatly overflowed that vast place of worship. This sensible and judicious sermon was founded on Matt. xiii. 9, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." On the Wednesday following he preached again at Tottenham-court Chapel from these words—"Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts." This discourse was delivered under circumstances which rendered it peculiarly affecting and impressive. In the evening he took his leave of the Tabernacle congregation, preaching from Acts xx. 32, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified." On Thursday evening he delivered his farewell-sermon at Woolwich, to the congregation which was of his own planting; and on the following morning preached on Tower Hill to an immense con-

"Jesus, thy Guardian, walks the briny wave,
Or on the whirlwind rides, or rules the storm;
His eye regards thee, vigilant to save,
Though danger varies its terrific form.

"Black gath'ring tempests, aw'd by his command,
Their hideous forms in lowly murmurs cease;
Whilst o'er the monstrous surge he waves his hand,
Or spreads the silky mantle of his peace.

"The Lord of elements is Lord of men;
He stills the menace of the hostile wind;
His servants, soon as the glad port they gain,
In hearts prepar'd shall friendly welcome find.

"Lo! India's tawny sons incline the ear,
And pause attentive to the sacred Word;
Heralds of God! your embassy declare,
And win obedient nations to the Lord.

"Proclaim the Cross, the banner lifted high,
And bid a guilty world find refuge there;
So shall the praise of myriads rend the sky,
And heaven and earth the mighty blessings share.

"Gleams the glad morn! arise, O King of kings,
Assume, assert thine universal sway;
Till earth subdued, its willing tribute brings,
And distant regions cheerfully obey.

"Then, big with conquest, bring thy glories down,
Let those that love thy name thy praise declare;
Friends of the Cross, they soon shall wear the crown
In peaceful rest, and bliss for ever share."

course of people collected on this interesting occasion. He spoke from Luke vii. 48, "And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven." He closed his ministerial labours in London at this time on Sunday morning, in the immense building of Tottenham-court, which was crowded from door to door. The passage selected for closing the solemn scenes of what was not inaptly termed the METHODIST JUBILEE was taken from the last chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

The vessel, however, being detained some time in the Downs by a contrary wind, the missionaries preached almost every day on shore. Mr. Cook being so near Dover, where he had supplied in his turn for some months, wished to see his friends once more. He went unexpectedly and preached a lecture, which was remarkably owned. Several of the students also went to Dover on the next sabbath, in order to preach. A fair and brisk gale springing up in the night, the ship sailed, and most of them were left behind. Two of them remained in England, the Rev. Henry Mead, who afterwards took orders in the Established Church, and died a few years since at Reading; and the Rev. William White, who took the small-pox, which obliged him to give up the idea of going to America. He continued a diligent, faithful, and affectionate preacher of the Gospel in the Countess's Connexion till his death, which happened in November, 1777. He was of a consumptive habit, and unequal to a long voyage.

Mr. Eccles, who had returned to Ireland to take leave of his family and friends, arrived about this time, and embarked for America. Mr. Cook, with the rest, was yet determined on the voyage, and prosecuted the plan. "Nothing ever was so blessed," says Lady Huntingdon, "as the spirit in which they all went; and such a remarkable outpouring of the Spirit, that we trust is a pledge of their promised blessing to the heathen."

After a passage of only six weeks, these servants of God reached the place of their destination, without having experienced one day of real bad weather from the time they launched upon the bosom of the mighty deep. "A letter from Georgia," says Lady Huntingdon, "assures me of Cosson, Cook, and Billy the housekeeper being safe arrived. The finest passage that ever was known they had all the way, and under six weeks going. May the Lord bless and prosper them, and cause them to appear among the poor heathen with glad tidings, and owned and honoured of the Lord, whose servants they most surely are! We wait with impatience to hear of the rest; but those words

the morning before they sailed from Gravesend came with infinite power and sweetness—"Not a hair of their heads shall perish."

It was not long, however, before Lady Huntingdon had the satisfaction of learning the safe arrival of the remainder of the missionaries in America, and the cordial reception which they received from the friends of the late Mr. Whitefield.

Immediately on their arrival, they proceeded to the Orphan House, from whence they soon issued forth to spread the knowledge of the doctrine of their crucified Lord. As they had all preached in England, and considered themselves authorised to do so on their general plan, they travelled about the country and preached with much acceptance among serious Christians of different denominations. Their labours were crowned with singular success—many, by their ministry, received the light of the Gospel; and vast numbers of our sable-coloured brethren* were called, by their preaching and conversation, to the knowledge and love of our Lord Jesus Christ. The regions where they itinerated furnished happy evidences of the powerful word of a crucified Jesus among the wild wanderers in the forests and the boundless plains of that vast continent.

The spirit of activity manifested by the missionaries to make known the glory and to erect the kingdom of our Immanuel in the hearts of men, roused the dormant zeal of many to send the Gospel to their heathen neighbours, and endeavour to evangelise the Indian tribes. A door of hope for the entrance of the everlasting Gospel being thus opened, and the cordial approbation expressed and the affectionate regard testified towards those whom Lady Huntingdon had sent over, induced many to make earnest application to her Ladyship for further assistance, to keep alive the spirit of zeal and activity which had been excited to spread the glorious Gospel around them.

"America (says Lady Huntingdon) is honoured by the mission sent over. The province of Georgia have made proposals to build a church at their own expense, and present me with it, that the College of Georgia may have their ministry in that part honoured. The invitations I have for our ministry in various parts of America are so kind and affectionate, that it looks as if we were to have our way free through the whole continent.....My last letters from America inform me, our way appears to be made to the Cherokee Indians; and in all the back settlements we are assured the people will joyfully build us churches at their own expense, and present

* Two Africans, members of a church in the *Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion in Sierra Leone*, under the pastoral care of Mr. John Ellis (also a man of colour, now ninety years of age, and probably one of these brethren) have lately visited London. Meetings were held to receive them at Sion Chapel, Northampton Tabernacle, &c. They returned to Sierra Leone on Wednesday, June 19th, 1839.

them to us, to settle perpetually for our use. Some great, very great, work is intended by the Lord among the heathen. Should this appear I should be rejoiced to go myself to establish a College for the Indian nations. *I can't help thinking but before I die the Lord will have me there, if only to make coats and garments for the poor Indians. I am looking when some from among us shall be called to the JEWS—but the Gentiles by us will surely hear the voice of the Lord.*"

CHAPTER XLI.

Destruction of the Orphan House by fire—Observations of Mr. Berridge—Slave Trade—Remarks on Mr. Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon—Slave Trade at the Orphan House—Lady Huntingdon purchases Slaves—Anthony Benezet—Writes to Lady Huntingdon on the Slave Trade—Death and Funeral of Anthony Benezet—American War—Mr. Piercy—Mr. Keene and Lady Huntingdon—Colonel Tattersal—Lord George Germaine—Sir James Wright—Hon. Henry Laurens committed to the Tower—Mr. Channing—Mr. Laurens returns to America—Rev. John Johnson—Orphan House seized by the Georgians—General Washington—Sir James Jay—Dr. Franklin.

NOT many months after the arrival of the missionaries at Georgia, the Orphan House was accidentally destroyed by fire. On the first news of her great temporal loss in America, the Countess hastened to London. "No lives being lost in the fire (observes her Ladyship), has made my heart so thankful, that, for the many thousands I have temporarily lost by it, I could never wish it for ONE moment to be otherwise; believing the Lord removed it only out of our way, and that it was not somehow on that right foundation of simplicity and faith our work must stand upon. Though we may be disappointed, God, the Judge of all, is not defeated—all things are ordered according to the counsel of his own will." To the frustration of Lady Huntingdon's fond hopes and the defeat of Mr. Whitefield's design, the venerable Mr. Berridge, the friend of both, refers in a letter to the late Rev. Cornelius Winter, which, from the singularity of the style and sentiment, and as partly agreeing with her Ladyship's idea, is here presented to the reader:—

"It excites in me no surprise that the Orphan House is burnt down. It was originally intended for orphans, and, as such, was a laudable design, but has ceased to be an orphan house, in order to become a lumber-house for human learning, and God has cast a brand of his displeasure upon it; but how gracious has the Lord been to Mr. Whitefield, in preserving it during his lifetime! We all live to lay plans,

and you laid one last winter, but your Master has shown you he will not employ you as his counsellor."

Mr. Whitefield first landed in Georgia in 1773. "When able to look about him (says Dr. Gillies), he found every thing bore the aspect of an infant colony; and, what was more discouraging still, he saw it was likely to continue so, by the nature of its constitution. The people were denied the use of rum and slaves!" This the apostolic Whitefield wrote, and this Dr. Gillies recorded, without any comment. Indeed, Mr. Whitefield considered the denial of rum and slaves, as more than a misfortune to the colony. Hence, he adds (after stating that female heirs were not allowed to inherit lands), "so that, in reality, to place a people there on such a footing, was little better than to tie their legs and bid them walk. The scheme was well meant at home, but, as too many years' experience evidently proved, it was absolutely impracticable in so hot a country abroad."

How differently would Mr. Whitefield write if alive now! But then, he was not wiser than his times on the subject of slavery. Indeed, he soon became a slave owner, when he founded his Orphan House in Georgia. Nevertheless, his sentiments and feelings were very different from the generality of the proprietors of slaves. He soon became an instrument in turning the attention of many to the hard case of the negroes, and of exciting sympathy towards them. His letter from Georgia to the inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, and North and South Carolina, was printed in 1739, and is as follows:—

"As I lately passed through your provinces on my way hither, I was sensibly touched with a fellow-feeling for the miseries of the poor negroes. Whether it be lawful for Christians to buy slaves, and thereby encourage the nations from whom they are bought to be at perpetual war with each other, I shall not take upon me to determine. Sure I am it is sinful, when they have bought them, to use them as bad as though they were brutes, nay worse; and whatever particular exceptions there may be (as I would charitably hope there are some), I fear the generality of you who own negroes, are liable to such a charge; for your slaves, I believe, work as hard, if not harder, than the horses whereon you ride. These, after they have done their work, are fed and taken proper care of; but many negroes, when wearied with labour in your plantations, have been obliged to grind their corn after their return home. Your dogs are caressed and fondled at your table; but your slaves, who are frequently styled dogs or beasts, have not an equal privilege. They are scarce permitted to pick up the crumbs which fall from their master's table; not to mention what numbers have been given up to the inhuman usage of cruel task-masters, who, by their unrelenting scourges, have ploughed their backs, and at length

brought them even unto death. When, passing along, I have viewed your plantations cleared and cultivated, many spacious houses built, and the owners of them faring sumptuously every day, my blood has frequently almost run cold within me, to consider how many of your slaves had neither convenient food to eat, nor proper raiment to put on, notwithstanding most of the comforts you enjoy were solely owing to their indefatigable labours."

The letter from which this is an extract produced a desirable effect upon many of those who perused it, but particularly upon such as began to be seriously disposed in these times. And as Mr. Whitefield continued a firm friend to the poor Africans, never losing an opportunity of serving them; he interested, in the course of his useful life, many thousands of his followers in their favour.

The object of the Orphan House was to furnish scholastic instruction to the poor, and to prepare some of them for the ministry. Mr. Whitefield, ever attentive to the cause of the poor Africans, thought that this institution might have been useful to them also; but soon after his death they who succeeded him bought slaves, and these in unusual numbers, to extend the rice and indigo plantations belonging to the College. This fact might have been concealed, now that there are Americans who may employ it in their own justification; but we have not hid it, because even they cannot hide from themselves the fact, that the Countess of Huntingdon, or her chaplain, ought never to have held a slave. It was not like themselves—it was unworthy of them to do so! So it is of every American Christian. "I wot that through ignorance they did it, as did their and our fathers." They would not do it now. Who does not instinctively feel this? How difficult it is to believe that ever Mr. Whitefield or his noble patroness could have written the following words! In his memorial to the Governor of Georgia, for a grant of lands to found a College, he urges his request by stating that "a considerable sum of money is intended speedily to be laid out in purchasing a large number of negroes." In his memorial to the King, praying for a charter to the intended College, he pledges himself to "give up his trust, and make a free gift of all lands, negroes, goods and chattels, of which he now stands possessed in the province of Georgia, for the present founding, and towards the future support of a college to be called Bethesda." He makes a similar appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury, informing him that the number of negroes, young and old, is about thirty; and proving to him, that by "laying out only a thousand pounds in purchasing an additional number of negroes," the income of the college would be "easily

and speedily augmented." (There were *fifty* slaves, men, women, and children, at the Orphan House in 1770.) On the receipt of the first remittance from the Orphan House estate and property bequeathed to Lady Huntingdon by Mr. Whitefield, her Ladyship writes thus to Josiah Tatnall, John Glenn, and Nathaniel Hall, Esqrs., agents and attorneys for the Orphan House trust:

"The bill for 26*l.* 10*s.* 5*d.*, remitted by you, as a draft payable to me, upon Mr. Channing, and as arising from the trust estate of the Orphan House in Georgia, and my own property there (intended by me to be for ever united to it), must be returned to you, for the purposes of that trust, and expended by my order upon it, as having thus reached my immediate direction. I must, therefore, request that a woman-slave may be purchased with it, and that she may be called SELINA, after me, in order best to establish that period of my only receipt of money during the whole course of my possessing that trust, or my own property there, and that in your accounts it may fully fix and determine the time of this remittance, taking care that it may appear as by my special appointment of it. This will be needful, as it will so stand in my accounts of this trust when delivered in by me."

We may well exclaim, "Lord, what is man!"

The encouragement thus given to the slave trade excited the attention of the excellent and venerable Anthony Benezet,*

* Anthony Benezet was the personal friend of Mr. Whitefield, who frequently lodged at his house whenever he visited Philadelphia. His father was one of the many Protestants who, in consequence of the persecutions which followed the revocation of the edict of Nantes, sought an asylum in foreign countries. After serving an apprenticeship in an eminent mercantile house in London, he removed to Philadelphia, where he joined in profession the Quakers. He considered the accumulation of wealth as of no importance, when compared with the enjoyment of doing good; and he chose the humble, despised, but beyond appreciation useful, and honourable, situation of a schoolmaster, as according best with this notion, believing, that by endeavouring to train up youth in knowledge and virtue, he should become more extensively useful than in any other way to his fellow creatures. His works on the calamitous state of the enslaved negroes in the British dominions contained a clear and distinct development of the subject, and became eminently instrumental in disseminating a proper knowledge and detestation of the trade. He died at Philadelphia in the spring of 1784. The interment of his remains was attended by several thousands of all ranks, professions, and parties, including some hundreds of those poor Africans, who had been personally benefitted by his labours, and whose behaviour on the occasion showed the gratitude and affection they considered to be due to him as the benefactor of their whole race. It was at this amiable philanthropist's funeral, when hundreds of weeping negroes stood round, that an American officer said, "I would rather be Anthony Benezet in that coffin, than General Washington with all his fame."

A branch of the Benezet family remained in England, and intermarried with the family of Dr. Claude Fournereau, of Christ Church Park, in the county of Suffolk. His descendant, the late Major Benezet, was a resident at Margate for many years, where he acquired considerable property, a great portion of the new town having been built on land belonging to him. The name is now nearly extinct—only one person remaining, an old bachelor, upwards of seventy years of age.

one of the most zealous, vigilant, and active advocates, the cause of the oppressed Africans ever had. He seemed to have been born and to have lived for the promotion, and never to have omitted the least opportunity of serving that cause. He opened a correspondence with Lady Huntingdon, in order to lay before her Ladyship, as a religious woman, the misery she was occasioning in Africa by allowing the managers of her College in Georgia to give encouragement to the traffic in human blood. The Countess replied, that such a measure should never have her countenance, and that she would take care to prevent it.

Her Ladyship had estates in Georgia, and on being entrusted with Bethesda, her first act, as described in a letter to the Hon. James Habersham, dated London, Sept. 19, 1772, was to send over a teacher, the Rev. Mr. Crosse, with several students, to be established as her own family on her property there; a president for the Orphan House, and others, with full commissions, she says, will follow, and a regular plan be laid down for the house, the school, and the estate, which, she declares, she never regarded as her own. Her own housekeeper is to be sent to regulate all according to her Ladyship's direction. Mr. Longworthy, who had left the house, is directed to return and wait the arrival of Mr. Piercy, the appointed president; and she indicates a hope of visiting Georgia in person. On the same day, she urges Mr. Wright, for the sake of his master, Mr. Whitefield's memory, for the sake of his own soul, and the souls of thousands, to exert himself in discharging the trust reposed in him by Mr. Whitefield, and now temporarily renewed by her; a similar exhortation addressed on the same day to Mr. Crane is also before us. In all these letters she speaks of the dreadful state into which the institution is reported to have fallen, and piously hopes that God has so ordained it as a prelude to increased usefulness. The breaking out of the American war interrupted the good works of the venerable Countess; but the reduction of Charlestown gave Mr. Piercy the long-wished-for opportunity of returning to Europe; after eight years' absence, he joyfully embraced the first convoy that sailed from Carolina, on the 5th of October, 1780. The Mary and Charlotte, in which Mr. Piercy and his family sailed, unfortunately foundered at sea, after they had been out one month; but they were most kindly taken on board his Majesty's ship Hydra, Captain Gardner, the Commodore of the convoy, and were landed at Cork in the beginning of December, after a passage of two months.*

* It was on the 4th of December, 1780, that Mr. Piercy returned, for on that

On the 20th of January her Ladyship writes to Mr. Piercy, then at Cork, giving him a good account of the chapel at Woolwich, which his friend, Mr. Groves, had filled with a fine congregation; of the deed, and will, and power of attorney, left with her by Mr. Piercy, and of all the trust he had confided to her. She then remarks on the trust he had held for her, and on the fact that during eight years she had not received from him any account of her affairs. "Your brother Richard told me of his having driven to Boston forty-one of my best slaves, and sold them to Mr. Elliots. He also said that 1,000*l.* a year out of the estate would be a bad bargain for me." She then asks for an abstract of his accounts, remarks on her bad state of health, which makes writing painful, and hopes that his enemies will be proved liars. Her Ladyship refers to the very delicate situation of Mrs. Piercy and the sufferings of the family, which however, she can only lament. On the 27th her Ladyship wrote again to Mr. Peircy, referring to a letter meanwhile received, and which her Ladyship appears to have regarded as in part a justification of his silence, and she refers him to Mr. Evans, at Bristol, who will pass his accounts. On the 16th of February she wrote again, justifying her doubts and apparent severity, but evidently more inclined to believe in Mr. Piercy's justification: she reminds him that reports were spread of his having allied himself with the rebels, and advises him to wait on Lord George Germaine, Secretary of State, and purge himself of that suspicion.

He was detained there by Mrs. Piercy's delicate situation through the winter, then he went to Dublin, thence to Bristol, where his kind patroness had ordered a house and every accom-

day a letter, dated Cork Harbour, was addressed by him to Mr. Keene. He narrates the foundering of the ship, the kindness of Captain Gardner of the *Hydra*, and adds, that foul winds and scarce provisions had compelled them to put into the Cove of Cork. He describes himself as entirely without money, and gives accounts of several bills which he had drawn on Mr. Keene for the expenses of his own passage, and that of his wife and two daughters, &c. Mr. Keene, on the 14th of December, enclosed Mr. Piercy's letter to Lady Huntingdon, observing, that he would give the holders of the bills her Ladyship's address. Her Ladyship returned Mr. Piercy's letter on the same day, as it was Mr. Keene's security, and begs him not to send the holders of the bills to her, but promises to secure Mr. Keene if he pays them, at the same time observing that eight years without any account of his trust forbids her believing herself Mr. Piercy's debtor. Mr. Keene (still on the 14th) writes again, absolutely refusing to have anything to do with the bills, says he has closed accounts with her Ladyship, and is always hearing of illiberal abuse of him on her side, and that he never had any account with Mr. Piercy, and that, in short, he had sent the holders to her Ladyship. On the same day Lady Huntingdon declares her intention to return the bills unaccepted, as she had not given authority to draw on any one.

modation to be ready for his reception, and where Mr. Evans, a respectable merchant, and one of the committee for the management of her chapel there, was engaged to inspect and pass his accounts relative to the Orphan House, and the expenses of the Mission in its first establishment in Georgia.

Mr. Piercy arrived in Bath the beginning of March, 1781, and gave such an explanation of the affairs in Georgia, and of the trust reposed in him, as satisfied the mind of Lady Huntingdon, who, unwilling to suppose that any evil or falsehood lurked beneath the statement, confirmed the authority placed by Mr. Piercy in the hands of Messrs. Tatnall, Glenn, and Hall, constituting them agents, by letters of attorney, for all her property in America.

On the 29th of March, 1781, Mr. Piercy writes to Messrs. Tatnall, Glenn, and Hall, at Georgia, telling them of his disastrous voyage, of his delay at Cork of a whole winter on account of Mrs. Piercy's state, of his thirty-six hours' sail to Bristol, &c., and confirming the power of attorney he left in their hands. He desires them to sell all the slaves on the Countess's estates at full value in Carolina, and remit the price to her in government bills, and also the proceeds of the crops of 1778, 1779, and 1780. He calls on Mr. Bailie to account for plate and linen, and desires that the orphan negroes may be made to plant as much as possible. In another letter he accuses Mr. Bailie of asserting that the French troops carried off furniture, &c., which he, Mr. Piercy, knows to be in Mr. Bailie's possession; accuses him of misapplying the crops, and appropriating very valuable articles of Mr. Whitefield's, and altogether gives a disgraceful picture of the state of that "greatly injured charity."

The delicate and important situation in which the Countess stood before the public with regard to Georgia, had forced her to seek for information from the highest quarters. The well-known Lord George Germaine was at the time one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, and he, on her Ladyship's application, wrote to Sir James Wright, Governor of Georgia, who advised her Ladyship to give full powers of attorney to Colonel Tatnall and Mr. Hall to call to account Mr. Bailie, who was then resident at Bethesda, and this her Ladyship had already done.*

* Meanwhile her Ladyship was most anxious for the final deposition of the affairs of Georgia, and also that it should be shown that she had acted faithfully to Mr. Whitefield's memory. She received nothing during twelve years from the estates in America, but expended thousands, and paid the bills of Mr. Habersham, of Mr. Piercy, of Tatnall and Hall, then of Savannah, of Smith of Carolina, &c. &c.

In 1782, the Americans again seized her estates and the Orphan House; but,

Soon after Mr. Piercy's arrival in England, Lady Huntingdon began to suspect that all was not right in his accounts. This caused some reserve on her part, which her niece, Mrs. Wills, thought unkind. As a justification of her conduct, she thus wrote to Mr. and Mrs. Wills, in March, 1782.

"So united in heart as we are, it is incumbent on me, with the greatest simplicity of my spirit, to clear up matters relative to Mr. Piercy, of which you are yet ignorant, and may suppose my backwardness in helping him (if I could) might appear unkind at present. He was eight years abroad upon my estates. Mr. Keene's accounts prove between *five and six thousand pounds* were remitted, including the expenses attending his going out with students. *Six-and-twenty hundred pounds*, the second year of this, was expended in buying slaves, which, united with the Orphan House slaves, made near four-score in number, sufficient for a large estate. And after these were put upon my own estate, there was upon Change in Bristol an offer of *eleven hundred pounds sterling* yearly to be paid me. After this, *six* years passed without a single line or scrap of paper, or any account whatever. He then, without leave, sold *five-and-forty* slaves to a great amount, and took the bonds for this money in his own name, and brings me a scrap of paper, with the bond signed by a lawyer as existing, but so managed, that I cannot see a legal claim I can make for the recovery of the money. Indeed, I have every reason to apprehend the worst from Mr. Piercy's conduct; but in love to him, and respect for his family, I do not wish to make these things known to others, till justice shall force me to exculpate my seeming neglect of the trust of my dear old friend, Mr. Whitefield—the fullest proofs I require to establish his honesty. To my kind American friends I must look for assistance in this matter, and pray the Father of Lights to guide me into all truth, and enable me to judge honourably of Mr. Piercy, if circumstances will in any way admit of my so doing. My poor heart is sadly perplexed in this affair. Do pray for me, my very, very dearest friend."*

The Countess was now surprised and shocked by an event which led ultimately to incalculable good. His Excellency the

as she writes to Mr. Channing, the greatest losses were by the King's troops, and the Americans behaved to her with extreme kindness. Mr. Piercy, as her Ladyship says to the Rev. Joseph Cooke, at Charlestown, after spending all the annual revenue of the Georgian estates, in October 1783, threatened her Ladyship with a bill in Chancery for further demands. His conduct appears to have been altogether devoid of honesty and truth; he appropriated all the property, brought false accounts against most respectable men, and, living in luxury, said he did so out of his wife's estate.

* For some time after his return to England, Mr. Piercy continued to supply her Ladyship's chapels at Bath, Bristol, Brighton, London, Norwich, &c. It was during this period that he preached one of the sermons at the opening of Surrey Chapel. When Lady Huntingdon became satisfied as to the truth of those unpleasant insinuations which had long been whispered, he was engaged by Mr. Keene for the service of the Tabernacle and Tottenham-court chapels,

Hon. Henry Laurens, President of the American Congress, whom she had long known and admired for his many estimable qualities, had been deputed by his country to solicit a loan from Holland, and to negotiate a treaty with the united Netherlands. On his passage, he was captured by a British vessel, on the banks of Newfoundland. He threw his papers overboard, but they were recovered by a sailor and sent to England. He was then committed to the Tower, as a state prisoner, on a charge of high treason, and his life was staked on the success of the American revolution.*

Immediately on hearing of his committal, Lady Huntingdon made application to Lord Viscount Stormont and Lord George Germaine for permission to visit him, but her request was refused; and during his confinement, which was more than a year, he was treated with great severity, being denied, for the most part, all intercourse with his friends, and forbidden the use of pen, ink, and paper. His capture occasioned no small embarrassment to the Ministry. They dared not condemn him as a rebel, through fear of retaliation; and they were unwilling to release him, lest he should accomplish the object of his mission. The intrigues discovered in his papers led to a war between Great Britain and Holland, and Mr. Adams was appointed in his place to carry on the negotiation, on the part of America, with the United Provinces.

Enfeebled in health, and apparently sinking into the grave through his continued confinement, Mr. Laurens sent a petition to the House of Commons for his release, relating that he had laboured to preserve the friendship between Great Britain and the Colonies, and had extended acts of kindness to British prisoners of war. At the close of the year, he was accordingly released; and, with Mrs. and Miss Channing, proceeded to Bath to recruit his health. Here they enjoyed the society of Lady Huntingdon and several persons of distinction, whom she introduced to them.

After some months' residence at Bath, Mr. Laurens proceeded to Paris, and with Franklin, Adams, and Jay, signed the preliminaries of peace, November 30, 1782, having been appointed by

in which connexion, however, he did not long continue. Some years after, he had his degree of D.D., and became minister and proprietor of Queen-square Chapel, Westminster. He was subsequently presented to the rectory of St. Paul's Church, Charlestown, South Carolina; and died in London, July 13th, 1819, in the 75th year of his age.

* The father of Mr. Laurens was the regular correspondent and confidential adviser of Mr. Whitefield, during his visits to America. Miss Laurens had gained Lady Huntingdon's attachment during a visit to England. She was the wife of Dr. D. Ramsay, the biographer of Washington.

Congress one of the Commissioners. He afterwards returned to England, where he remained till his final return to his native land, in the summer of 1784. His son accompanied him on the voyage, and he took with him the fullest authority from Lady Huntingdon, for the management and investigation of her affairs abroad.*

The arrangement of this affair being secured, her Ladyship's attention was directed to the Rev. John Johnson,† as a suitable person to direct the affairs of the Orphan House. His stern integrity and his earnest desire to be useful, sometimes placed objects before him in a too prominent view, and involved him in difficulties which he might have escaped; but even in the midst of these, though he suffered in his person and his circumstances, his character remained unimpeachable.

Such was the man whom Lady Huntingdon sent to America. At first his labours were attended with every prospect of ultimate success; but soon the scene began to change, and he experienced considerable inconveniences, on account of his determining to instruct the negro-slaves belonging to the House contrary to the then existing laws.‡

The state of public affairs between the American Colonies and Great Britain, which issued in a protracted war, and ultimately in the entire separation of most of those colonies from

* Mr. Laurens died at Charlestown, December 8, 1792, aged 69. Miss Laurens, afterwards Mrs. Ramsay, died in 1811. (See an interesting life of this lady by her husband, Dr. Ramsay.) His son, Henry Laurens, died in May, 1821; and his eldest son, Colonel Laurens, in 1783, at the early age of 29.

† He was publicly ordained at Spafields Chapel, on the plan of the Secession, in 1783, and became minister of St. George's, Manchester. He had great mechanical genius, considerable musical and poetical ability, and his inventive powers were tested in a scheme for a universal language. He left a grammar of the Hebrew language in MS.

‡ His principal sufferings, however, were occasioned by the death of his honourable patroness. With the account of her death, he received power to assert the trust of the Orphan House, according to the tenor of her will. About a month after this, he received a letter from the Speaker of the House of Representatives, informing him that a bill had passed that house, declaring the property vested in the Countess of Huntingdon to be a life estate, and vesting the same in certain trustees nominated by the said act, thereby annulling her Ladyship's will, and alienating the Orphan House, &c. from the trust which she had appointed. Soon after this Mr. Johnson received further intelligence that, on a certain day, the trustees appointed by the General Assembly would come to take possession of the estate. They came accordingly; but he, like a faithful steward, resisted the claim, resolving not to give up possession till he was compelled to do so by the highest legal authority. The commissioners retired; and in the evening two constables were sent, from whom Mr. Johnson experienced the most abusive treatment. Still he remained in the house; but the next day he was forced out of possession. Both he and Mrs. Johnson were dragged violently off the premises, and he was placed in a state of imprisonment. During his confinement, he received some flattering proposals of being

England, rendered the designs of Mr. Whitefield and the exertions of Lady Huntingdon abortive, the whole of the property having been seized by the Americans.*

Her Ladyship had now a noble project with regard to America. She resolved to convert all the revenues of the Orphan-house at Bethesda, and of her own estates, into a fund for the establishment of a mission to the Indians, on a grand scale. With this view she wrote, on April 8, 1784, to General Washington, a letter, of which the following is a copy:—

“ Sir—I live in hopes that before this you must have received, by our mutual and most excellent friend, Mr. Fairfax, the grateful acknowledgments of my heart for your most polite and friendly letter; this further trouble arises from the kindness of Sir James Jay offering to take charge of my packets to the several Governors of those States of America, to whom I have applied on the subject of my most anxious wishes for the poor Indians; and I felt it quite impossible to let anything go out of my hands without communicating my intentions to you before all others. I have, therefore, taken the liberty of sending you with this a copy of my circular to the Governor of each State, together with a plan, or rather outlines of a plan, thrown together to convey some idea of my views. With my very best compliments to Mrs. Washington, I remain, with the greatest respect and esteem, Sir, your most obliged and most faithful and obedient humble Servant,
(Signed) “ S. HUNTINGDON.”

To the same illustrious person her Ladyship wrote again, on April 23, 1784, of which letter the following is an extract:—

“ Sir—I should lament the want of expression extremely, did I believe it could convey with the exactness of truth the sensibility your most polite, kind, and friendly letter excited in me. Any degree of consideration for the nearest wishes of my heart that stand connected with services to the Indian nations, eminently demands my ardent thanks. No compliments can be accepted by you, the wise Providence of God having called you to, and so honoured you in a situation far above your fellows, and, as one mark of his favour to his servants of old, has given ‘ the nations to your sword, and as the driven stubble to your bow.’ Allow me then to follow that comparison till that character shall as eminently belong to you, ‘ He was called the friend of God.’ May, therefore, the blessings obtained for the poor, so unite the temporal with the eternal good of those miserable, and neglected, and despised nations, that they may in future ages be enabled to bless you,

constituted the president of the Orphan House, with a liberal stipend, on condition that he would submit to the new regulations; but these he disdained to accept. At length, he was officially liberated. Still he persisted to maintain his right of possession; but, being left without support, he was unable to prosecute any further appeal.

* No fewer than forty-five original letters, now before us, have been laid under contribution in the preparation of this chapter.

whose fatherly hand has yielded to their present and everlasting comfort. I am obliged to say that no early or intemperate zeal under a religious character, or those various superstitious impositions too generally taken for Christian piety, does in any measure prevail with my passion for this end, to raise an altar for the knowledge of the true God, and Jesus Christ our Saviour whom he hath sent, where ignorance alike of him and of themselves so evidently appears, are my only objects; and thus to convey the united blessings of this life with the lively evidence of an eternity founded on the sure and only wise testimony of immutable truth; so all my wants or wishes in this matter, and my poor unworthy prayers are for these providences of God, that may best prepare the way to so rational and great an end, I have been induced, from this great object before me, to accept of the obliging offers of Sir James Jay (who was upon the point of embarking for America), to convey the outlines of my design to each of the Governors of those States in which, from nearest access to the Indian nations, and for soil and climate, a situation for many hundred families for the services of the Indians and the establishment of a people connected with me should appear best, and whose object would be to support the Gospel, and render these Missionaries, sent by me for the Indians and the various ministrations among themselves, the most consistently useful for all. Should I be able to obtain a sufficient quantity of land suitable for such purposes, my intentions would be to transfer both my trust estate, with all my own property in Georgia, for this more extensive prospect, and which, from the extreme heat of the climate, renders the labours of Missionaries there of little advantage. This, with the poor little all I have on earth to give, has been long devoted to God. Should ever so happy a period arrive, as in his tender mercies to us we might be made the fortunate and honoured instruments in that great day approaching for calling the heathen nations as his inheritance, to the glorious light of the Gospel."

A regular organised plan has been found among Lady Huntingdon's papers, encouraged by the Earl of Dartmouth, for obtaining a grant from Government of a considerable portion of these lands. Students were to have been sent from Trevecca College, and other steps taken to spread the Gospel in those spiritually destitute regions. But the war of America with the mother country frustrated this, as well as the attempt to carry on the Orphan House.*

We may add, that this place was afterwards abandoned; the

* With regard to the religious character of General Washington, there have been different opinions. In the extracts from some of his private letters which have been published by the historian of his life, the name of the Supreme Being is once or twice introduced in a manner which in common conversation is deemed irreverent. It is also understood that, in a few instances, during the war, his language was unguarded in this respect. It may not be impossible that a good man, in a moment of extreme irritation, should utter a profane expression; but perhaps it is less possible that such a man, when his passion has passed away, and his sober recollections have returned, should not repent bitterly

trustees, who were chosen from different denominations, not agreeing amongst themselves in the choice of successors to fill the vacancies occasioned by death. Two members of the same denomination were contrary to the original intention; at length Dr. Benjamin Franklin was named, with the observation, that he was merely an *honest man*, and of *no sect* at all, which prevailed with the trustees to choose him. The site was purchased for a school, and a much handsomer and more commodious place erected by the labours of Mr. Gilbert Tennant.

With Franklin the Countess had no correspondence; but no one can forget his character of Mr. Whitefield. It finds a place in the note beneath.*

of his irreverence to the name of God. On the other hand, General Washington, at the head of the army, issued public orders, calling upon his officers to discountenance the habit of profanity; he speaks in his writings of "the pure and benign light of revelation," and of the necessity of imitating "the charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion;" he gratefully acknowledges the interpositions of Providence in favour of his country. His life was virtuous and upright. He principally supported an episcopal church in the neighbourhood of Mount Vernon, where he constantly attended public service. During the war he not unfrequently rode ten or twelve miles from camp for the benefit of the institutions of religion; and it is believed that he every day had his hour of retirement from the world for the purpose of private devotion. General Washington died December 14th, 1799, and Mrs. Washington survived him till May 22, 1803.

* In 1739 arrived among us, from Ireland, the Rev. G. Whitefield, who had made himself remarkable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking a dislike to him, soon refused him their pulpits, and he was obliged to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was a matter of speculation to me (who was one of the number) to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally *half beasts and half devils*. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town of an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street. And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemency, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner proposed, and persons appointed to receive contributions, but sufficient sums were soon received to procure the ground and erect the building, which was a hundred feet long and seventy broad; and the work was carried on with such spirit as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of *any preacher of any religious persuasion*, who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia.

Mr. Whitefield, on leaving us, went preaching all the way through the colonies to Georgia. The settlement of that province had lately been begun, but instead of being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen accustomed to labour, the only people fit for such an enterprise, it was with families of broken shopkeepers and other insolvent debtors; many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the gaols, who, being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land,

and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspired the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an orphan-house there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preached for this charity, and made large collections, for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance. I did not disapprove of the design; but as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at a great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house at Philadelphia, and brought the children to it. This I advised; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refused to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper-money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold; as he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper; another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all! At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had by precaution emptied his pockets before he came from home: towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong inclination to give, and applied to a neighbour, who stood near him, to lend him some money for the purpose. The request was made to perhaps the *only man* in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, "At any other time, friend Hopkinson, I would lend thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to me to be out of thy right senses."

Some of Mr. Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument; but I, who was intimately acquainted with him, never had the least suspicion of his integrity; but am to this day decidedly of opinion, that he was in all his conduct a perfectly *honest man*, and methinks my testimony in his favour ought to have more weight, as we had no religious connexion. He used indeed sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a more civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death. The following instance will show the terms on which we stood. Upon one of his arrivals from England at Boston, he wrote to me that he should come soon to Philadelphia, but knew not where he could lodge when there, as he understood his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, was removed to German Town. My answer was—"You know my house; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome." He replied, that if I made that kind offer for *Christ's sake*, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned, "Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for *Christ's sake*, but for *your sake*."

The last time I saw Mr. Whitefield was in London, when he consulted me about his orphan concern, and his purpose of appropriating it to the establishment of a College.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance; especially as his auditories observed the most perfect silence. He preached one evening from the top of the Court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market-street, and on the west side of Second-street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance: being among the hindmost in Market-street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards, down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Prout-street, when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle, which my distance should be the radius, and that it was filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than *thirty thousand*. This

reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the history of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.

In the early part of his life, Mr. Whitefield was preaching in an open field, when a drummer happened to be present, who was determined to interrupt his pious business, and rudely beat his drum, in a violent manner, in order to drown the preacher's voice. Mr. W. spoke very loud, but was not as powerful as the instrument; he therefore called out to the drummer in these words—"Friend, you and I serve the two greatest masters existing, but in different callings—you beat up for volunteers for King George, and I for the Lord Jesus: in God's name, then, let us not interrupt each other; the world is wide enough for both, and we may get recruits in abundance." This speech had such an effect on the drummer, that he went away in great good humour, and left the preacher in full possession of the field.

CHAPTER XLII.

Students from Trevecca visit Dorsetshire—Derbyshire—Devonshire—Somersetshire, &c.—Success of their Labours—Mr. Lake—Mr. Romaine—Mr. Benson—Archbishop of Canterbury—Lady Huntingdon's Interview with George the Third—Anecdotes of the King—Lady Huntingdon's Chaplains—His Majesty's Letter to the Archbishop—The King's Opinion to Lady Huntingdon—Duchess of Ancaster—Anecdote of a Lady of Quality and the King—His Majesty's Advice—Feathers' Tavern Association—Letter to Lady Huntingdon from Edmund Burke, Esq.—Rejection of the Petition—Observations on Subscription to Articles of Belief—Dissenters' Bill—Lord Chatham and Archbishop of York—Mr. Theophilus Lindsey—Death of Howel Harris—Letters from Lady Huntingdon—Letters from Mr. Toplady—Mr. Herdsman—Letter from Lady Huntingdon on his Ordination.

FROM the first establishment of the College at Trevecca, Lady Huntingdon usually resided a considerable portion of every year at her "beloved retreat," regulating its concerns, and sending the students to such parts of the kingdom as solicited her assistance. By this means many towns and villages were visited with the glad tidings of salvation; and in very many instances "the Word of the Lord had free course, and was glorified," in the conversion of vast numbers. From this period the students, as well as the ministers and chaplains employed by the Countess, were laboriously occupied in diffusing the doctrines of the cross, and the glorious fruits of these delightful labours of love have long since been gathered by the Divine Husbandman to the land of rest and peace and joy.

As early as the year 1771, Lady Huntingdon's students first

visited Dorsetshire, in consequence of repeated invitations; and from time to time several preachers in her connexion were sent into that county. In the vicinity of Broadmain, near Dorchester, their ministry was attended by great crowds, and amongst the rest by Mr. James Lake.* Various opinions were entertained of them and of their preaching; the prevailing one appears to have been, that they were the "false prophets," of which they were commanded by Christ to "beware." But while many spake evil of this way, others experienced that "the Gospel of Christ," which they preached, "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Lady Huntingdon's students now first began to visit Staffordshire and Warwickshire. The number of pious and faithful ministers of Christ was few indeed in these counties; hence their sphere of action was extensive, and their labours heavy. At Birmingham, Wednesbury, Darlaston, Walsal, Bilston, Wolverhampton, and many other intervening places, they frequently preached in the open air, and in some of them met with considerable persecution, yet never received any serious injury. Lady Huntingdon having visited most of these places before, and the preaching of Mr. Venn, Mr. Piercy, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Stillingfleet, through Divine mercy, proved a blessing to many. The countenance of Lord Dartmouth was particularly useful in furthering the labours of her Ladyship's ministers. His Lordship loved the Lord Jesus Christ with sincerity and fervour, and was hearty in the support of his cause.†

At the particular request of Mr. Toplady and Mr. Holmes of Exeter, Lady Huntingdon sent the students to preach at Broad

* Mr. Lake's mind was very painfully exercised on this subject; he was afraid to go and hear them, and yet could not stay away in peace. Another opportunity offered, and he set out for the appointed place. On his way thither, his perplexity became a perfect agony; he fell on his knees, and prayed that if they were, as was reported, the false prophets, rather than he should be deluded by them, some accident might happen to him to convince him that it was wrong to attend their ministry; but that if, on the contrary, they were indeed servants of the Most High God, and did show the way of salvation, the truth might that day come with power to his heart. God, who knew his sincerity, blessed him under the preaching of the Word; and all his doubts were removed. He embraced the truth, and the truth made him free. From that day he became a decided character, and no calumnies or reproaches could shake his attachment to the people of God.

† It was at this time that Mr. Romaine first preached in Derby, having frequently attempted it on other visits to Derbyshire, but was always refused the use of the church. He also preached several times at Ashbourn, Duffield, Belper, and other places, with great acceptance and success. At Shottle, and other villages in the neighbourhood of Belper, considerable attention was excited, and great numbers crowded to hear the preaching of Mr. Romaine, Mr. Powley, Mr. Jesse, and others, who from time to time visited those places, under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon. An excellent man, Mr. Thomas

Hembury, and in the towns of Moreton, Hampstead, Crediton, and Topsham, and in various villages in the vicinity of Exeter. In each of these places they met with great opposition; yet some in heaven, and others on their road thither, bless God they ever heard her Ladyship's ministers.

In the dark parish of Barton St. David, Somersetshire, the Gospel was introduced about the same period by the students from Trevecca, some of whom preached at South Petherton and other places in that county. Many of the first fruits of their labours are fallen asleep in Jesus. From that time divine worship was kept up in private houses. A small, decent chapel was erected there in 1804, almost solely by the exertions of the people, who subscribed cheerfully to this good work.

The Rev. Thomas Jones, afterwards of Cathall, in Sussex, was the first student that preached at Alvaston and Melbourn. He afterwards preached a few times at Derby, in the Market-place; and, as appears by the "Derby Mercury" of the 10th of September, was announced to preach in the morning of the following sabbath in a room situated in a yard at the back of the Town Hall, which had been fitted up as a school-room. He was soon joined by the Rev. Joseph Griffiths, late of Aston, Berks, whom Lady Huntingdon sent to the assistance of Mr. Jones. As the engagement of these faithful and laborious ministers of the Gospel permitted them to come to Derby only occasionally, it was usual to send the public crier round to announce their intention to preach; in this manner the congregation was raised, and, with the assistance of other ministers in the neighbourhood, was greatly enlarged. One of the first ministers who supplied the congregation was the Rev. J. D. Middleton, a student from Trevecca. Several of the surviving hearers of this gentleman speak highly of him; but he soon after resigned his charge, and became pastor of a Baptist church at Lewes, in Sussex.*

Slater, at that time residing at Shottle, under the constraining influence of zeal for his Saviour's glory, and compassion for the perishing souls of his fellow-men, employed his sabbaths in preaching the Gospel of salvation to the poor, in the neglected villages of his own neighbourhood. He met with the treatment which might be expected from an ungodly multitude; but he bore it with patience and fortitude; and the word which he preached proved the power of God to the salvation of many. By this good man, Lady Huntingdon and the ministers she employed were always received with delight, and welcomed as the messengers of mercy to those who were in darkness and in the region of the shadow of death.

* Mr. Middleton died suddenly, Jan. 18, 1805. He went to bed on the preceding evening in apparent good health; but at twelve o'clock was seized with an apoplectic fit, when medical aid was immediately sent for by Mrs. Middleton, but, alas! in vain. He lay insensible till about three o'clock on the following afternoon, when he breathed his soul into the bosom of the Redeemer. On the

After Mr. Middleton's secession, the place was variously supplied. At length the Rev. Thomas Bryson, who had been educated in Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca, and, after quitting it, had preached at York and Lancaster, came to Derby, where his labours were for a time abundant, preaching not only in the barn, but also in the open air when the weather would permit, and in most of the neighbouring villages. He had a commanding appearance, a fine voice, and a good elocution. His sentiments were strongly Calvinistic, and his style of preaching doctrinal, with frequent striking appeals to the conscience, and awful representations of death, judgment, and eternity. He soon became very popular, and acquired great influence over the people, but he often manifested a considerable degree of warmth which produced unpleasant effects, and eventually led to a separation between him and a portion of his congregation. For the separate use of the Seceders, the late Mr. Thomas Wilson, of Islington, (a native of the county, who manifested on various occasions great concern for the moral and spiritual welfare of its inhabitants), purchased premises in the Brookside, and erected at his own expense a meeting-house, with a convenient vestry; Mr. Bryson, with the remainder of the congregation, continuing for a short time to occupy the barn till he left Derby for London.

During their former visits to Derby, Mr. Jones and Mr. Griffiths also preached very frequently at Ashbourn. The old Presbyterian meeting-house, which had been shut up for some time, was procured, and Mr. Jones settled here on leaving Melbourne, and continued with the people till he removed to Oathall.

A neat and commodious chapel was afterwards erected at the sole expense of Mr. John Cooper, of London, who had been a native of Ashbourn. This new chapel was opened on the 20th of May, 1801.* The venerable Alexander Start is still the pastor of this church.

About this time Lady Huntingdon engaged in an affair which had excited much of the public attention, and ultimately drew forth the censures of royalty. Dr. Cornwallis, Archbishop of Canterbury, during the preceding winter, had given several

second sabbath after his death, the awful providence was improved in a funeral sermon to his bereaved congregation, by Mr. Upton, of London.

* The Rev. Mr. Crockford read the Liturgy used in the Countess of Huntingdon's connexion; after which, the Rev. Jonathan Scott, of Matlock, preached from Num. x. 27. Mr. Roby, of Manchester, preached in the afternoon, from Psalm xxvi. 8; and Mr. Rust in the evening, from Hag. ii. 9. As a further testimony of his affectionate concern for his native place, Mr. Cooper erected a dwelling-house for the minister, and seven alms-houses for poor aged women, all which he liberally endowed, and vested the property in the hands of the trustees of the Countess of Huntingdon's establishment.

large balls and convivial routs at his Palace. Mrs. Cornwallis was also recognised in all the journals of the day as a leading personage in the fashionable world, who eclipsed everybody by the splendour and magnificence of her equipages and entertainments. These outrages on all decency attracted the notice of every friend to propriety, and even drew forth many satirical observations from some of the gay personages who were most frequent at the Palace. Although Lady Huntingdon did not feel herself called upon to be a regulator of public morals, she nevertheless felt that such gross violations of established order and decency required some check. With the Archbishop her Ladyship was unacquainted; but, through the medium of a family connexion, she was resolved on making some attempt, in a private way, to put a stop to what was so loudly complained of on all sides. George, first Marquis of Townshend, had married her Ladyship's cousin, Lady Charlotte Compton, only surviving child of the Earl of Northampton, who inherited in his own right the Baronies of Compton and Ferrers of Chartley. The marquis was nephew, by marriage, to Charles Earl of Cornwallis, brother to the Archbishop; and by this means Lady Huntingdon obtained an audience with his Grace of Canterbury, having been introduced by the Marquis of Townshend, who attended her to the Palace, and seconded her Ladyship's remonstrances. Although this matter was conducted with the utmost privacy and delicacy on the part of Lady Huntingdon and the Marquis Townshend, his Grace was violently offended, and Mrs. Cornwallis scrupled not to reprobate and ridicule Lady Huntingdon in all the fashionable circles. But this, instead of having the effect she so much desired, only drew additional odium on the Archbishop, whose popularity sustained a severe shock by a line of proceeding so utterly inconsistent with the gravity and decorum of the sacred character of a prelate.

Lady Huntingdon, having failed in this attempt, next applied to Mr. Madan, whose brother, Dr. Spencer Madan, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough, had married Lady Charlotte Cornwallis, niece to the Archbishop of Canterbury. But his Grace, still disregarding every remonstrance, and becoming more violent in his abuses of those whom he was pleased to brand as Methodists and hypocrites, Lady Huntingdon made application for a private audience with the King, which was most graciously granted.

On the day appointed, her Ladyship, accompanied by the Duchess of Ancaster and Lord Dartmouth, went to the King's Palace at Kew, where she was received in the most gracious manner by both their Majesties. The King listened to every

thing she said with great dignity and marked earnestness, but with evident emotion: "Madam," said he, "the feelings you have discovered, and the conduct you have adopted on this occasion, are highly creditable to you. The Archbishop's behaviour has been slightly hinted to me already; but now that I have a certainty of his proceedings, and most ungracious conduct towards your Ladyship, after your trouble in remonstrating with him, I shall interpose my authority, and see what that will do towards reforming such indecent practices."

Lady Huntingdon had the honour of conversing with their Majesties for upwards of an hour, on a great variety of topics.

The King and also the Queen complimented her Ladyship in the highest terms on the many benevolent actions which had been reported to them, and her great and commendable zeal in the cause of religion. His Majesty then told Lady Huntingdon that he was no stranger to her proceedings; but added, that he often found it difficult to obtain an unprejudiced account of what she said and did. "I have been told so many odd stories of your Ladyship," said the King, "that I am free to confess I felt a great degree of curiosity to see if you were at all like other women; and I am happy in having an opportunity of assuring your Ladyship of the very good opinion I have of you, and how very highly I estimate your character, your zeal, and abilities, which cannot be consecrated to a more noble purpose."

His Majesty then spoke of the talents of some of her Ladyship's preachers, whom he understood were very eloquent men. "The bishops," said he, "are very jealous of such men;" and he went on to mention a conversation he had lately had with a dignitary whom he would not name. The prelate had complained of the conduct of some of Lady Huntingdon's students and ministers, who had made a great disturbance in his diocese. "Make bishops of them—make bishops of them," said the King.* "That might be done," replied the Bishop; "but, please your Majesty, we cannot make a bishop of Lady Huntingdon." "Well, well," said the King, "see if you cannot imitate the zeal of these men." "As for her Ladyship, you cannot make a bishop of her, 'tis true; it would be a lucky circumstance if you could, for she puts you all to shame," the Queen added. His Lordship made some reply, which did not please the King, and his Majesty, with more than usual warmth, remarked, "I wish there was a Lady Huntingdon in every diocese

* He had said the same of Mr. Wesley; and his grandfather used the same words when some complaints were made against Mr. Whitefield.

in the kingdom !” It is remarkable that this bishop never after made his appearance at court.

The Queen inquired for Lady Chesterfield, who had been a great favourite with their Majesties, but had not visited court for some years. The King reminded Lady Huntingdon of his father, of whom he spoke in a feeling manner, and lamented his premature death. “I remember seeing your Ladyship,” said the King, “when I was young. You then frequented the court circle; and I cannot forget that you was a favourite with my revered father, the Prince of Wales.”

“We discussed a great many topics (says Lady Huntingdon), for the conversation lasted upwards of an hour, without intermission. The Queen spoke a good deal—asked many questions—and before I retired, insisted on my taking some refreshment. On parting, I was permitted to kiss their Majesties’ hands; and when I returned my humble and most grateful acknowledgments for their very great condescension, their Majesties immediately assured me they felt both gratified and pleased with the interview, which they were so obliging as to wish might be renewed.”

A few days after this interview, the good monarch addressed the following admonitory letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury:—

“My good Lord Prelate,—I could not delay giving you the notification of the grief and concern with which my breast was affected, at receiving authentic information that routs have made their way into your palace. At the same time, I must signify to you my sentiments on this subject, which hold these levities and vain dissipations as utterly inexpedient, if not unlawful, to pass in a residence for many centuries devoted to divine studies, religious retirement, and the extensive exercise of charity and benevolence; I add, in a place where so many of your predecessors have led their lives in such sanctity as has thrown lustre on the pure religion they professed and adorned.

“From the dissatisfaction with which you must perceive I behold these improprieties, not to speak in harsher terms, and on still more pious principles, I trust you will suppress them immediately; so that I may not have occasion to show any further marks of my displeasure, or to interpose in a different manner. May God take your Grace into his almighty protection! I remain, my Lord Primate, your gracious friend,
“G. R.”

The first time their Majesties saw Lord Dartmouth, after the interview with Lady Huntingdon, the King told him he thought her Ladyship one of the best of women, a sentiment in which the Queen heartily concurred. “I was much taken with her appearance and manner,” said his Majesty; “there is something so noble, so commanding, and withal so engaging about her,

that I am quite captivated with her Ladyship. She appears to possess talents of a very superior order—is clever, well-informed, and has all the ease and politeness belonging to a woman of rank. With all the enthusiasm ascribed to her, she is an honour to her sex and the nation.”

The habitual piety of the King was perhaps the most striking feature of his character: it was manifested at a very early period of his life, and continued with him, bright and glowing, to the last. Although he might be said to be more particularly the Father of the Established Church, he was still the zealous friend and advocate of genuine religious toleration. All classes of his religious subjects were equally objects of his tenderness and love. His Majesty, happening one day to pass in his carriage through a place near one of the royal palaces, where a rabble had gathered together to interrupt the worship at a meeting-house, his Majesty stopped to know the cause of the tumult; and being answered that it was only some affair between the town's-people and the Methodists, he replied, loud enough to be heard by many, “The Methodists are a quiet, good kind of people, and will disturb nobody; and if I can learn that any persons in my employment disturb *them*, they shall be immediately dismissed.” The King's sentiments soon spread through the town, and persecution has not dared to lift its head there since that period.

The King's anxiety for the prosperity of the Established Church was great, yet he was far from being displeased when he saw persons of other persuasions propagating zealously what they believed conscientiously. His displeasure, however, he could not conceal, when he saw men who professed to believe acting as though they believed not.

The Duchess of Ancaster was for some years a constant attendant at Lady Huntingdon's house, and always professed a great respect for religious persons, with whom she frequently associated. For Lord Dartmouth she had a very high esteem, and always lived in habits of great intimacy with him and Lady Dartmouth. This union was strengthened by a near family connexion, the Duke of Ancaster having had for his first wife, Lady Nicholl, the mother of Lady Dartmouth. One day, at court, Lady Huntingdon became the subject of conversation, when a lady of rank observed, she thought her so great an enthusiast, that she certainly must be deranged in her intellects. The King, who had been listening most attentively, replied, with great quickness, “Deranged, madam! did you say?” “Yes, please your Majesty,” said her Ladyship, “for no one could act as she does that was not insane;” and then related the circum-

stance of Lady Huntingdon having called on the Archbishop of Canterbury to "preach to his Grace" for presuming to see company, which impertinence, she said, Mrs. Cornwallis resented with a becoming spirit. Their Majesties and the Duchess of Ancaster exchanged looks, and the King laughed heartily. The Duchess of Hamilton, who was present, fearing the unfortunate Marchioness would get deeper into the scrape, made a motion to her to be silent, which the King perceiving, immediately demanded of her Ladyship what Mrs. Cornwallis had said of Lady Huntingdon, and if the Archbishop had not given her his blessing. "His blessing!" repeated the Marchioness, with much surprise; "no, indeed, please your Majesty; I am sure she had no right to expect any such favour. I really don't know what I might not have said had she intruded herself upon me in a similar manner." Observing the Duchess of Ancaster smile, the Marchioness added, "If your Majesty wishes to be further informed of Lady Huntingdon's practices, I dare say the Duchess of Ancaster can give you every information, as she is a very great friend of her Ladyship's." "I am proud of the friendship of such a woman," replied the Duchess, "and know of nothing to condemn, but much to commend, in the Countess of Huntingdon."

The Queen, perceiving the temper of the Marchioness a little ruffled, observed, that she had lately derived much pleasure in the Society of Lady Huntingdon, whom she considered a very sensible, a very clever, and a very good woman. The unfortunate Marchioness was all astonishment and confusion, and would have withdrawn immediately, had not the King, in the kindest manner, taken her by the hand, and assured her she was quite mistaken in the opinion she had formed of Lady Huntingdon. "Pray, madam," said his Majesty, "are you acquainted with her?" The Marchioness replied in the negative. "Have you ever been in company with her?" inquired the King. "Never!" replied the astonished Marchioness. "Then," said the monarch, "never form your opinion of any one from the ill-natured remarks and censures of others. Judge for yourself; and you have my leave to tell every body how highly I think of Lady Huntingdon."

An event occurred about the same period, which called forth the energies of Lady Huntingdon, and stimulated her to the most active exertions. This was an association formed by some of the clergy of the Established Church and a few of the laity, for the purpose of making an application to Parliament to obtain relief in the matter of subscription, that a declaration of assent to the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures might be substituted

in lieu of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer.*

It is almost needless to add, that in a cause so pregnant with mischief, and so calculated to subvert the fundamental doctrines of the Established Church and the Reformation, Lady Huntingdon exerted herself with more than her usual activity and ardour. Her success corresponded with her labours and her hopes. Petitions poured in from every side; and the strongest opposition was expected from the University of Oxford, from Lord North, and from the whole body of Methodists and Evangelical Clergy. It being determined by the association not to defer the petition to another session, Lady Huntingdon and her friends were very active in soliciting the support of those members of the House of Commons who might be disposed to oppose the petition. Her Ladyship waited in person on several members, and their reception was highly flattering and encouraging. From Lord North, then first Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, Lady Huntingdon received the most positive assurance of support. Mr. Burke also expressed himself highly gratified at witnessing her zealous exertions, and promised the aid of his powerful talents when the petition came before the House. The letter of this distinguished ornament of the British Senate has been preserved, and is here presented to the reader:—

“Madam,—I am sensible your kindness and partiality to me will induce you to put the most favourable construction on my seeming neglect of the communication which your Ladyship did me the honour to address to me. Permit me to assure you that disregard and inattention to the contents of your letter, and the wishes of your Ladyship, had not the smallest share in it. I honour and respect the zeal and activity you have evinced on this occasion; and shall make it my study to merit the good opinion you entertain of me, which is so flattering to my feelings.

“It is with shame I find myself so late in answering a letter which

* This application to Parliament originated in the impression which was made upon the minds of many of the clergy by a work of Archdeacon Blackburne, entitled “The Confessional.” At the desire of some of his brethren, the Archdeacon published, in the beginning of the year 1771, “Proposals for an application to Parliament for relief in the matter of subscription, &c., humbly submitted to the consideration of the learned and conscientious clergy.” In consequence of these proposals, a meeting of the clergy in or near the metropolis was advertised for the 17th July, when it was unanimously agreed to form an association, for the purpose of applying to the legislature for relief. About fourscore attended; some from motives of curiosity, some as observers of the rest, and some to lend a helping hand to the business in agitation. This, from the place of meeting, was called the Feathers’ Tavern Association, and a petition having been drawn up by the Archdeacon, was adopted by the association, and circulated through the country with great industry, in order to obtain signatures previous to the meeting of Parliament.

gave me such sincere pleasure. I am happy in coinciding with your Ladyship in attachment for the Established Church. I wish to see her walls raised on the foundation laid in the volume of divine truth, that she may crush the conspiracy of Atheism, and those principles which will not leave to religion even a toleration. My sentiments in regard to the petition of the clergy, praying to be relieved from subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, are in opposition to the opinions of nearly all my own party. There is every probability of its being thrown out; and you may rely on my determined opposition to it in every stage. I have the honour to be, Madam, with the highest esteem and regard, your Ladyship's most faithful and obedient humble servant,

“EDMUND BURKE.”

Many regarded the object of the petition as frivolous; whilst others believed that it would be hazardous to meddle with the Articles. The prevailing opinion was that the application was ill-timed, and dangerous to the interests of the Established Church, and a general confederacy was formed to crush it.

On the 6th of February, 1772, agreeably to the resolution of the general meeting of the Feathers' Tavern Association, the petition was presented to the House of Commons. There was some difficulty in procuring a suitable person to present it; Lord John Cavendish and Sir George Saville having declined the office. At length it was introduced with an appropriate speech by Sir William Meredith, the brother-in-law of the late unhappy Lord Ferrers, whom Lady Huntingdon had in vain laboured to engage in opposing it. After a very animated debate, the House divided; the numbers for not receiving the petition were *two hundred and seventeen*,—for receiving it, *seventy-one*!

Lady Huntingdon, though at all times the advocate of toleration and religious liberty, in the most liberal and extensive sense compatible with the public tranquillity and the good of the community, strongly objected to the principles of the petition. She felt convinced that Parliament could not grant any relief to those who had already subscribed, as they had no power to vacate oaths; and that for those who were not yet beneficed, and who wanted to seize on the emoluments of the Church without believing in her tenets or complying with her laws, they were not at all to be listened to, as, from every principle of reason and justice, they should be excluded from her for ever. She perfectly agreed with Mr. Burke on the plea, that while *the associators professed to belong to the Establishment, and profited by it*, no hardship could be implied in requiring some common bond of agreement, such as the subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, among its members. The great majority that rejected

this petition, insisted that all governments had a right to constitute the several orders of their subjects as they pleased; that the priesthood, in this instance, stood in the same predicament with the others; that it was necessary that those who were appointed to be the public teachers and instructors of the people, should be bound by some certain principles from which they were not to deviate; that to prevent the disorder and confusion incident to so great a number, it was also necessary that some public symbol should be established, to which they should all assent, as a mark of their conformity and union. It was also said, that, so far as subscription related to the clergy, who were those principally concerned, it could not be considered that they suffered any injustice, as they were under no necessity of accepting benefices contrary to their conscience; and, if their scruples arose afterwards, they had it always in their power to quit them; and that every man now, according to the prayer of the petition, was at liberty to interpret the Scriptures for his own private use; but that his being authorised to do so for others, contrary to their inclination, was a matter of a very different nature.

In the course of the debates upon the petition for relief in the matter of subscription, several favourable sentiments were thrown out with regard to the Dissenting ministers, and some concern was expressed for the hardships they suffered in being obliged, under heavy penalties, to subscribe the articles of a church to which they did not belong, and from which they sought neither promotion nor emolument; and some gentlemen declared their readiness to consent to a bill for their relief.

This favourable disposition in one part of the legislature naturally occasioned a meeting of some of the ministers in London, to consider of a petition to Parliament for that purpose. For a period of more than thirty years Lady Huntingdon had cultivated a close intimacy with many of the leading characters amongst the orthodox Dissenters, most of whom were as strongly attached to the doctrinal parts of the Articles as even the members of the Established Church. Her Ladyship's well-known principles of religious liberty and toleration, and her long and intimate friendship for many without the pale of the national Establishment, whom she considered the excellent of the earth, shared her cordial approbation of the measure, though she deeply regretted that the persons who chiefly occupied themselves in this affair professed theological and political opinions which she dared not approve. The bringing in of this bill gave great alarm to the High Church party, who, seeing the former

petition immediately succeeded by another attack upon the Thirty-nine Articles, began to imagine that some settled design was formed subversive of the established religion. They accordingly opposed it with great warmth; but found the general sense of the House strongly against them, and were surprised to see a considerable part of administration, and almost the whole of opposition, for once join in opinion, and both appear equally sanguine in the cause of religious liberty, and for the extending the benefits of toleration. The motion was carried through the House of Commons by a great majority; but upon a second reading in the House of Lords, it was thrown out by a still greater majority. Although the voice of justice did not prevail at this time, yet some years afterwards, a bill was passed, substantiating the declaration of belief in Christianity, in lieu of subscription to the Articles.

It was upon this occasion that Dr. Drummond, Archbishop of York, attacked the Dissenting ministers as men of close ambition; but they met with an able advocate in the great Earl of Chatham, who made this noble defence: "This is judging uncharitably, and whoever brings such a charge without proof, defames." Here the enlightened statesman paused for a moment, and then proceeded—"The Dissenting ministers are represented as men of close ambition: they are so, my Lords; and their ambition is to keep close to the college of fishermen, not of cardinals; and to the doctrine of inspired apostles, not to the decrees of interested and aspiring bishops. They contend for a scriptural creed and spiritual worship; we have a Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Armenian clergy. The Reformation has laid open the Scriptures to all; let not the bishops shut them again. Laws in support of ecclesiastical power are pleaded, which it would shock humanity to execute. It is said that religious sects have done great mischief when they were not kept under restraint; but history affords no proof that sects have ever been mischievous when they were not oppressed and persecuted by the ruling church."*

* It will seem extraordinary that pending the application to Parliament for the relief of Dissenting ministers, tutors, and schoolmasters, a printed paper was circulated very widely, signed by several ministers about London, opposing the application, and stating their reasons for so doing. In this list we find the names of some men eminent for piety and extensive usefulness in the Church of Christ—Samuel Brewer, Edward Hitchen, John Trotter, John Macgowan, and Henry Hunter. With Mr. Brewer and Mr. Macgowan Lady Huntingdon had long maintained a friendly intercourse; and she felt extreme regret at being obliged to oppose the sentiments of those whom she personally knew and esteemed. But the cause of truth and religious liberty were dear to her heart, and she could not be silent. Her Ladyship is said to have expostulated with Mr. Brewer and Mr. Macgowan with much good temper, as well as great force of argument.

The Rev. Theophilus Lindsey had been wavering in his sentiments relative to the doctrine of the Trinity, and subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Established Church.

Soon after the meeting at the Feathers' Tavern, he announced his intention of resigning the living of Catterick, as absolutely necessary for his own peace with God, which he preferred above all considerations. In this resolution he was strongly opposed by Lady Huntingdon, who endeavoured, by every argument and motive which zeal and friendship could suggest, to retain in the Church a man so truly upright and conscientious. But her efforts, though well intended, were unavailing. Mr. Lindsey's resolution had been formed upon deliberation too mature, and upon principles too sacred and too firmly riveted, to be in the least degree shaken by the arguments or expostulations of his worthy patroness and friend. He had formed an acquaintance with Dr. Priestley and Mr. Turner of Wakefield, both Socinians, and, convinced by their arguments, adopted their principles, religious and political.

In obedience to what he considered the voice of conscience, he resigned his residence and living of Catterick, with all its secular advantages and comforts. The sentiment expressed by our admired poet, Cowper, was unquestionably that of the great majority of orthodox persons on the conduct of Mr. Lindsey, and those other gentlemen who afterwards followed his example. And it is so still.

“ They now are deem'd the faithful, and are prais'd,
Who, constant only in rejecting Thee,
Deny thy Godhead with a martyr's zeal,
And quit their office for their error's sake;
Blind, and in love with darkness!”

During the year 1773, Lady Huntingdon lost her old and stedfast friend, Howel Harris, one of Mr. Whitefield's most energetic followers, and a man of extraordinary powers of body and mind.

“ Mr. Harris is gone home in triumph, (says Lady Huntingdon to Mr. Romaine, under date of July 29, in this year,) and he now rests from all his labours.

“ This indefatigable servant of God fell asleep in Jesus last week. During his illness, he said, ‘ I feel myself growing very weak to-day, and am in much pain, and feel my spirit crying, O, my dear Father, art thou coming to strike the last stroke? When our Saviour shall come and raise my spirit from nature and death, and everything here below, to his own spirit, then I shall know what it is to be cleansed and purified. I feel that my spirit goes to God, not as his creature, but as his child, and the purchase of his blood. My spirit crieth continually,

O come, come, Lord, come quickly. I feel my spirit among the suppliant here before his throne, and find freedom here to say, I have done my work, I have finished my testimony, I have run my race; what more remains for me to do, but to come home to my God, and Father, and friend, and best relation? All thy friends are my friends, and all thy enemies are my enemies. O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and take me home to rest. I feel my spirit rejoicing and singing—

‘My Lord is gone, and I must go,
I cannot stay content below.’

“When he was confined to bed, and could no longer preach or exhort, he said, ‘Blessed be God, my work is done, and I know that I am going to my God and Father, for he hath my heart, yea, my whole heart’—adding, ‘the enemy is permitted to torment my body; blessed be the Lord, he is not suffered to come near my spirit.’ He very often repeated these words with the utmost joy:—Glory be to God, death hath no sting! Death hath lost its sting!’ At another time he expressed his faith and ardent desire to depart, saying, ‘I am in great pain, but all is well, all is well; He hath settled all things well. Oh! how would it be if the sting of death had not been taken away? O, that I could now go home, for my work is done here.’

“And thus this good man went home to rest.

“It is impossible to describe the grief that is manifested every where, on account of the death of Mr. Harris; he was so beloved, and so esteemed as the spiritual father of multitudes who were converted under his powerful preaching, and enabled to venture their souls upon an infinite Saviour, entirely depending on his righteousness for the acceptance of their persons and services. Truly his loss is felt at the College, where many were awakened by his lively ministry. The last time he preached at the College, there was as great a crowd as usual; and his preaching was as searching and rousing as ever. He spake with a mighty sense of God, eternity, the immortality and preciousness of the souls of his hearers, of their original corruption, and of the extreme danger the unregenerate were in; with the nature and absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Ghost, and of believing in Christ, in order to our pardon, justification; yielding acceptable obedience, and obtaining salvation from hell and an entrance into heaven. He spake as became the oracles of God in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; and especially when he came to his application, he addressed himself to the audience in such a tender, earnest, and moving manner, exciting us to come and be acquainted with the dear Redeemer, as melted the assembly into tears.

“On the day he was interred we had some special seasons of Divine influence, both upon converted and unconverted. It was a day never to be forgotten; but, I think, ought to be remembered with holy wonder and gratitude by all who were present. Not fewer than twenty thousand people were assembled on this solemn occasion, and we had abundance of students in the College, and all the ministers and exhorters who collected from various parts to pay their last tribute to the

remains of a great man. We had three stages erected, and nine sermons addressed to the vast multitudes, hundreds of whom were dissolved in tears. Fifteen clergymen were present, six of whom blew the Gospel trumpet with great power and freedom. Though we had enjoyed much of the gracious presence of God in our assemblies before, yet, I think I never saw so much at any time as on that day; especially when the Lord's Supper was administered, God poured out his Spirit in a wonderful manner. Many old Christians told me they had never seen so much of the glory of the Lord and the riches of his grace, nor felt so much of the power of the Gospel before.

"I hope soon to open a chapel in Worcester. Lincolnshire and Kent promise great things. Mr. Townshend* and Mr. Spencer† are supplying at Bath, where the Spirit is most evidently with the word, and the work of the Lord, through infinitely wonderful grace, prospering in their hands. Lady Fanny Shirley has frequent meetings at her residence, and many of the nobility attend, some of whom have been led to cry, 'What must we do to be saved?'—Mr. Shirley is labouring at Brighton, and his family are now with Lady Fanny at Bath. The work spreads amazingly in Gloucestershire. Mr. Milner is labouring with great zeal and boldness in Hull; there he meets with much obloquy and abuse. I have some students there supplying my chapel, whose ministry has been remarkably owned.

"Accept my thanks for the hints you have given me relative to the students; they shall be attended to, and any suggestions which may further the cause, will be most gratefully received. I am happy you approve the plans I have adopted. The salvation of poor souls is my one object upon earth, and my greatest earthly happiness and joy. I can freely declare that I have seen God's Spirit accompanying the preaching of the students in many places, by which precious souls have been subdued to himself; which, I apprehend, is only an earnest of much greater blessings to his church; for he has said that he will make the 'knowledge of himself to cover the earth, as the waters do the sea.' Zion shall yet 'look forth (out of all the clouds of contempt cast on her), fair as the morn, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' I doubt not but 'the light of the gospel-sun shall yet increase as the light of seven days,' for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

"When you have a little leisure, Mr. Shirley will be glad of your assistance at Brighton. Mr. Madan and Mr. Venn are at Oathall: the latter I expect here this month,—also Mr. Toplady and Mr. Berridge. I must conclude myself your very faithful and affectionate friend, in the best bonds,

"S. HUNTINGDON."

In the spirit of this letter, her Ladyship wrote to several clergymen to assist her in the work of grace, by joining their labours with hers. One of them, Mr. Toplady, replied, that he thought himself qualified rather for regular than irregular

* Rev. Joseph Townsend, A.M., rector of Pewsey, in Wiltshire.

† Rev. Edward Spencer, rector of Winkfield, near Bradford, Wiltshire.

service, and that his course appeared to be the plain and useful one of pastoral teaching :—

“ I remember, that in one of my last conversations with dear Mr. Whitefield, antecedently to his last voyage to America, that good and precious man of God said as follows :—‘ My good Sir, why don’t you come out, why don’t you come out ? you might be abundantly more useful, were you to widen your field, and preach at large, instead of straining your ministry to a few parish churches.’ My answer was to this effect—that the same Providence which bids others to roll at large, seems to have confined me to a particular orbit. And I honestly own I am still of the same mind. If there be for me a yet more excellent way, God, I trust, will reveal even this unto me. I hope I can truly say, that I desire to follow his guidance with a single eye.

“ As to the doctrines of special and discriminating grace, I have thus much to observe : that, for the four first years after I was in orders, I dwelt chiefly on the general outlines of the gospel. In the usual course of my public ministry, I preached of little else but of justification by faith only in the righteousness and atonement of Christ ; and of that personal holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. My reasons for thus narrowing the truth of God, were (with humiliation and repentance I desire to speak it,) these two : 1, I thought these points were sufficient to carry as clear an idea as was absolutely necessary, of salvation by grace. And 2, I was partly afraid to go any further.

“ God himself (for none but he could do it,) has since gradually freed me from that fear. And as he never at any time permitted me to deliver, or even to insinuate, aught that was contradictory to His truths, so has he been graciously pleased, for between seven and eight years past, to open my mouth to make known the entire mystery of His Gospel, as far as his spirit has enlightened me into it. The consequence of my first plan of operation was, that the generality of my hearers were pleased, but very few were converted. The result of my latter deliverance from worldly wisdom and from worldly fear, (so far as the Lord has exempted me from these snares,) is, that multitudes have been very angry ; but the conversions which God hath given me reason to hope he has wrought, have been, at least, three for one before. Thus, I can testify, so far as I have been concerned, the usefulness of preaching predestination, or, in other words, of tracing salvation to its first source.

“ Your Ladyship’s goodness will pardon the unreserved freedom and plainness with which I have taken occasion to open my mind ; nor will you, I hope, disbelieve me, when with the same simplicity and truth I assure your Ladyship that I love and revere you, for what God has made you, and for what he has effected through you. Let me have, as you kindly promise, an interest in your prayers.”

The late Rev. Richard Herdsman, who received his education at Trevecca, under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, was sent by her Ladyship, about two years previous to this period

to South Petherton, in Somersetshire. A place having been fitted up for Divine worship, Mr. Herdsman, in conjunction with other students, laboured in it with considerable success. In process of time, a church was formed, and Mr. Herdsman received an unanimous call to the pastoral office, which he accepted with much fear and trembling. His ordination soon after took place, a new place of worship was erected, and Messrs. Reader, Ashburn, English, and others engaged in the service.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Chapels of Lady Huntingdon in London—Ewer-street Chapel, Princess-street, Westminster—Opened by Dr. Peckwell—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. English—Mr. Beck—Mulberry Gardens Chapel—Mr. Charles Stewart Eccles—Mr. Coughlan—Mr. John Clayton—Mr. George Burder—Letter from Mr. Toplady—New Mulberry Gardens Chapel—Mr. Isaac Nicholson—Mr. Stoddart—Spafields Chapel—Richmond Theatre—Letter from Mr. Toplady—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Northampton Chapel opened—Opposition of Mr. Sellon—Consistorial Court—Mr. Berridge's advice—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Lord Dartmouth—Mr. Thornton—Spafields Chapel re-opened by Dr. Haweis—Queries sent to Mr. Sergeant Glynn—Letter from the Recorder of London to Lady Huntingdon.

AT a very early period of her religious course, we find the benevolent and ardent mind of the Countess directed towards the spiritual wants of London, that emporium of error and dissipation. At her house in Park-street, and subsequent residence at Chelsea, Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Fletcher, the Messrs. Wesley, Mr. Berridge, Mr. Madan, Mr. Venn, Mr. Jones (of St. Saviour's), and other eminent ministers of Christ, proclaimed all the words of this life to the highest personages in the land. At her Ladyship's earnest recommendation, the residences of Lady Gertrude Hotham, in New Norfolk-street, Grosvenor-square, and Lady Fanny Shirley, in South Audley-street, were opened, and in their spacious drawing-rooms these apostolic labourers proclaimed the truth to numbers of the nobility. Her liberal heart next devised the plan of hiring or erecting chapels for the accommodation of the poorer classes. In the beginning of 1770, her Ladyship took the lease of a chapel in Ewer-street, which had been occupied for a long series of years by a society of Quakers, and supplied it for some

time by students from her own College. One of these, a Mr. Causton, preached there about nine months; but, complying with her Ladyship's wishes, he went over to America in 1772; and Mr. Smith, another student, preached at this place until removed by death. Mr. William Crawford being requested by the people to preach his funeral sermon, a way was prepared for his settling amongst them.*

About the year 1773, a large and commodious meeting house in Princess-street, Westminster, becoming vacant by the removal of the congregation under Dr. Kippis to another place, erected upon a much more contracted scale, in consequence of the diminution of the society,† it was repaired and enlarged by the pious munificence of Lady Huntingdon, aided by the zeal and liberality of some persons of respectability, who had the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom much at heart; and opened by Dr. Peckwell in April, 1774. Speaking of this chapel in a letter to Mr. Hawkesworth, dated April 2, 1774, her Ladyship observes:—

“I am going to the College, with the Lord's leave, and from thence shall send you the best help I can. Dear Mr. Peckwell is ready in heart, but a large chapel of mine, holding more than three thousand, is to be opened this next week; and this being in the heart of Westminster, requires our most eminent ministers to follow up that preparation of heart the Lord has wrought,—and another I am going to erect in Wapping. The Lord has sent us Mr. Haweis to join our

* This connexion took place in 1776, and in the following year the present building was erected. Mr. Crawford being of the Particular Baptist denomination, a regular society was formed here upon similar principles, but it was agreed to allow mixed communion. There is a small burial-ground behind the meeting-house. Mr. Mansfield and Mr. Elliott, two respectable clergymen, occasionally preached there; and some of the ministers supplying at the Tabernacle at Tottenham-court Chapel lent their assistance. Having become a Dissenting congregation, her Ladyship's attention was directed to a larger field of usefulness, where her ministers and students could preach with a greater prospect of success.

† In the early stages of non-conformity, when talent and respectability characterised its leaders, and an attachment to principle the people, this was one of the most flourishing societies amongst the English Presbyterians. It was first collected in the reign of Charles II., not long after the passing of the Act of Uniformity, by the learned Mr. Cawton, chaplain to the pious Lady Armine, who was one of the ministers ejected by that statute. Mr. Vincent Alsop, Mr. John Shower, and Dr. Edmund Calamy, were successive pastors of this church. Happy would it be for the cause of our common Christianity, were the same glorious truths that characterised the ministrations of the early non-conformists taught with similar faithfulness in some modern congregations! With the falling off of the congregation there was an equal declension from the doctrines taught by the earlier pastors of this society. At length, it became necessary to erect a place of worship upon a much smaller scale, where, notwithstanding the pains that are taken to uphold the cause of what is, by a perverseness of language, called “Unitarianism,” the success is by no means apparent, and the society seems fast hastening to a dissolution.

Connexion ; and indeed he is a most blessed and extraordinary minister. Yet pray on we must for more labourers in our harvest, for truly it is great, and the labourers are few."

For some years this chapel was supplied by a rotation of ministers of the Established Church, many of whom preached with much acceptance. Mr. Toplady occasionally laboured in this sphere of usefulness with much utility ; as also Mr. Shirley, Mr. Glascott, Mr. Pentycross, Mr. Jesse, and Dr. Haweis ; and many by their instrumentality were savingly converted. After some time Dr. Peckwell became the stated minister, and the name was changed to that of "*Westminster Chapel*:"—

"I am happy (says the Countess) in having dear Mr. Peckwell settled in London ; his zeal and eloquence are so great, and he is so abundantly owned of God in the conversion of souls. Whilst he itinerates, the chapel will be supplied with the College services. Dear Mr. Toplady hath been much owned of God there, and Mr. Haweis, Mr. Jesse, and Mr. Glascott likewise. The congregation is very numerous, and many of the mighty and noble, as well as the poor, gladly hear the word, to some of whom it has proved the savour of life."

The late Mr. English, of Woburn, and Mr. Beck, minister of Bury-street meeting, were among the supplies here, which is remarkable for the number of ejected ministers, who have presided over it. Under Dr. Watts there was a very considerable revival in the congregation, and he had a large and respectable audience ; but Mr. Beck's hopes were not fulfilled.

The "*Mulberry Gardens Chapel*" is the next in succession. It was some time in the year 1773 that the Rev. Lawrence Coughlan, an episcopally-ordained clergyman, who had just returned from Newfoundland, and was then preaching in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, first directed her Ladyship's attention to this scene of her labours. In a letter to one of her students, (the late Rev. John Hawkesworth,) dated October 1773, she says, "I am treating about ground to build a large, very large chapel at Wapping, in London." The lease was for *twenty-one* years ; and during the building of the chapel Dr. Peckwell, assisted by Mr. Coughlan, the Rev. C. Stewart Eccles, an Irish clergyman who had returned from Georgia, and others, with several of her students, continued to preach under the Mulberry Trees with great acceptance and success.

The Rev. John Clayton, having finished his academical course at Trevecca, under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, had now commenced preaching in her Ladyship's chapels, and also in the Tabernacle connexion. Having obtained an established reputation as a preacher, Lady Huntingdon appointed him to

supply the Mulberry Gardens, where his ministry was much approved. About the period of which we are now writing, the Rev. George Burder also occasionally preached at this place.* He had been a stated communicant at the Tabernacle, and had just then began his ministerial career in the Methodistical way, by preaching in the open air, “which (says he) I have never seen reason to repent—I believe it is the best way still—and I rejoice that I began, at first, to go *without the camp, bearing his reproach*.”

The chapel was not opened till the close of the year 1776, and the delay was principally owing to some unpleasant differences relative to the choice of a resident minister. Mr. Toplady was then living in London, and was consulted by her Ladyship on the best means of terminating this painful controversy. His letter, detailing the particulars of the dispute between Mr. Coughlan and the managers appointed by her Ladyship, is dated October 29, 1776, from which we select the following extracts:—

“I have had a long interview with Messrs. Young and Gibbs, who have perused and taken a copy of the rough draught of the lease sent by your Ladyship. Since that period, I have requested to see them again; but four or five days are now elapsed without their coming. I would repeat my call on them at one or both of their houses, but I know, by experience, that I should run a very great risk of not meeting with them.

“From the conversation I had with them, they really strike me as upright, undesigning men, who have taken much pains to have a fixed stand for the Gospel at the Mulberry Gardens, and who have met with little more than *slander and misrepresentation* in return. They aver, that they never had the remotest wish of rendering the Chapel a Dissenting Meeting; that they would never consent to such a perversion of it from its original purpose; that they earnestly desire the whole management of the spiritualities may be vested entirely in your

* Mr. Burder's first serious impressions were received at Tottenham-court Chapel, where he frequently heard Mr. Whitefield and Captain Scott; he also occasionally heard Mr. Romaine with much profit. It is a singular circumstance, that Mr. Clayton and Mr. Burder were at this period scarcely determined whether to take their lot with the Dissenters or not. They had found abundantly more of the power of God with the Evangelical clergymen and with the Calvinistic Methodists; and they were rather inclined to enter into the Church, under the apprehension of obtaining a more extensive field of usefulness. It seems Mr. Clayton was at one time upon the eve of receiving episcopal ordination; but, upon further investigation, was led to dissent for reasons that appeared to him of sufficient weight. He afterwards became pastor of the Weigh-house meeting, one of the oldest and most respectable of the Dissenting churches in London; and Mr. Burder was pastor of Fetter-lane meeting, which has always ranked amongst the most ancient of the congregational persuasion, and in which both his father and brother were active and useful deacons for many years.

Ladyship ; and that it may be conducted on the same plan as your other chapels, where a *rotation* of ministers is kept up. They further add, that the sole reason why the building is at a dead stand (for so it still remains), is, Mr. Coughlan's visit to them, informing them, 'that, by your Ladyship's authority, *he* was to be stated minister of the chapel when finished.' Upon which, when the people heard of it, they peremptorily refused, and at this very day refuse to advance any further subscriptions ; and, moreover, insist upon their past subscription money being *returned* to them, as they are determined that neither Mr. Coughlan nor Mr. Latless (who went with him on the above occasion,) shall be fixed as a minister over them. If I may presume to give my judgment, I am most clearly of opinion that a people who have expended, and are expending, a considerable sum of money for erecting a place of religious worship on the plan of the Gospel, ought not to have Mr. Coughlan rammed down their throats, supposing him to be ever so good a kind of man. I am by no means convinced that they ever made any proposal to Messrs. Young and Gibbs respecting the transfer of the chapel from your Ladyship's patronage to *their* connexion. I have been twice at Mr. Keene's house, but he was, both of these times, from home. I shall take the first opportunity of putting the question to him.

"Mr. Coughlan has been thrice with me. I do not heartily fall in with all he says. He will have it that Young and Gibbs are Dissenters. They solemnly deny that charge ; and I firmly believe them. He denied to me, and called God to witness the truth of the denial, that he ever proposed himself to Young and Gibbs as the designed minister of the chapel in debate. On the contrary, *they* declare themselves ready to make affidavit of it before any magistrate or bench of magistrates in London. What shall we say to these things ? I would not be rash or uncharitable ; but I am prodigiously mistaken if Mr. Coughlan is not the snake in the grass ; or the Jonas, who, for some hidden ends of his own, has raised the whole of the present storm.

"*Allow me* likewise, without offence, to decline, most tenderly and most respectfully, letting my name stand on any instrument wherein Mr. Parker has anything to do. I have known him well ; and he is among that particular sort of good men whom I hope to meet in Heaven, but with whom I must beg to be excused from having much personal intercourse on earth."

Several letters passed between Lady Huntingdon and the managers relative to the Mulberry Gardens Chapel. Mr. Coughlan defended himself with much ingenuity, and deprecated the idea of ever having entertained an idea of becoming minister of the chapel. "Such contradictory statements," observes her Ladyship, "are puzzling, and leave a melancholy uncertainty of the truth and fidelity that ought to sway every honest heart." On the 8th of November, Mr. Hall, her Ladyship's attorney, called on Mr. Toplady, desiring such information as was in his power to give concerning the chapel. "At his

request," says Mr. Toplady, "I entrusted him with the rough draught of the deed, drawn up for you by your Ladyship's lawyer in Wales. The same evening I wrote to Young and Gibbs, and forwarded my letter by a special messenger; apprising them that, by your direction, I should engage a select number of your friends in town, to give them (Young and Gibbs) the meeting, on any day which they should fix; at which time, I added, I hoped the good providence of God would give such a turn to affairs as might result in the mutual satisfaction of both parties. I had no answer till the 14th, when I received a letter from Gibbs, which ran thus:—

"Sir,—I received your letter, and the same day received one from her Ladyship, which gives us no such information as what you mentioned in yours. And as our business is with her Ladyship alone, we shall not wait on you nor you on us."

"I immediately communicated the contents of the above to Mr. Hall by the penny-post, and desired him to act as he thought would be most agreeable to you. What has been since done, I know not."

An appeal on the part of the managers was made to Lady Huntingdon, who consulted with Mr. Toplady, Mr. Shirley, and others, on the best means of terminating this painful controversy. Through the kind interference of these gentlemen, who took great interest in all the affairs relating to Mulberry Gardens Chapel, the matter was amicably arranged, and the chapel opened according to the forms of the Church of England, and was supplied by a periodical change of ministers. The building, which was of considerable extent, was fitted up in a tasteful and elegant manner. The labours of her Ladyship's ministers gave great offence to their more regular brethren, who, alarmed at their popularity and ashamed by their diligence, endeavoured to silence them by various acts of persecution. Their efforts, however, were vain. Being sincere in the cause they had undertaken, opposition gave a stimulus to their exertions, and abundant success attended their unwearied and indefatigable labours.

The Independent Meeting House (called Nightingale-lane Meeting), of which the Rev. Henry Mayo, D.D., had for many years been the respected minister, was the freehold of Messrs. T. and R. Allen, brewers: as was also the Mulberry Garden Chapel. Wishing for the ground on which the Nightingale-lane Meeting stood to enlarge their brewery, and refusing to renew the lease of the Mulberry Garden Chapel, they proposed to the Nightingale-lane congregation an exchange of buildings, and engaged, on their agreeing to remove, to fit up at their own expense, the whole or any part of the said chapel for their

accommodation. The proposal was at length accepted. The chapel (a little contracted) was fitted up and opened on Sunday, April 1st, 1798. The late Rev. John Humphrys, LL.D., preached in the morning, from 1 Kings viii, 57, and the Rev. John Knight in the afternoon from Haggai ii. 9. The place was still to be called Nightingale-lane Meeting, nor was its name changed till the building was removed for the London Docks, when the congregation having purchased and fitted up a commodious Hall, in Pell-street, for a place of worship, it was usually denominated Pell-street Meeting.

Throughout the whole management of the business in question, there was nothing dishonourable either on the part of Mr. Knight or his friends.

After the expiration of the lease, the old congregation belonging to Lady Huntingdon's Chapel dispersed, some to the Ladyship's Chapel at Spafields, and others to Sion Chapel; but the greater part removed to Charlotte-street Chapel, where they continued to assemble till it was obliged to be taken down for the erection of the New Docks. The congregation, therefore, erected a new place of meeting in Pell-street, Wellclose-square, which was called the "New Mulberry Gardens Chapel." This spacious place of worship was opened on the same plan as the others in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, in which the service of the Church of England is regularly performed. It was opened on the 29th of September, 1802, on which occasion three sermons were preached: that in the morning by the Rev. John Hay, of Bristol: that in the afternoon by the Rev. F. W. Platt, of Holywell Mount Chapel: and that in the evening by the Rev. Griffith Williams, of Gate-street Chapel, Lincoln's-inn-fields. The chapel was supplied by a rotation of ministers, chiefly from the country, till the beginning of the year 1804, when the managers and people gave an unanimous call to the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, President of Lady Huntingdon's College, to be their pastor. This respectable clergyman accepted the invitation, and laboured there, with unabated ardour and growing usefulness for three years and a half, during which period one hundred and forty members were admitted to the society, a great proportion of whom were awakened under his own ministry. It will long be remembered by many with what humility and dependence upon supernatural aid he entered upon his work at the Mulberry Gardens Chapel, and how highly he valued and earnestly requested the prayers of God's people, as a most sure prelude to success. But his labours were not confined to this sphere of usefulness—he had a lecture on Tuesday evenings, partly at his own expense; nor did he ever refuse a call elsewhere. He also accompanied a beneficial reorganisation of his

church, for he was an enemy to promiscuous and unscriptural communion. Suitable officers were appointed, who, with their pastor, examined each member as to his experience, and after inquiring into his moral character, he was readmitted for communion. Other churches, probably, might be purged from errors of doctrine or practice, by the adoption of a similar plan of reformation.

Success accompanied Mr. Nicholson's labours, till the approaching termination of his mortal course. On the morning of June 21, 1807, he preached in his own chapel with so much energy and unction, that some of his hearers observed that he seemed to be ripening apace for glory. In the evening he preached at Stratford, where it pleased the Lord to visit him with the affliction which ended in his dissolution, which took place a few days after June 29th, in the forty-seventh year of his age. His remains were interred at Bunhill Fields, amidst a great concourse of serious persons. Mr. Platt spoke at the grave, and Mr. Bennet, of Birmingham (both ministers in the Countess's Connexion), preached the funeral discourse at the Mulberry Gardens Chapel, to an overflowing congregation, who testified their deep sorrow for his departure.

Soon after the Mulberry Gardens Chapel was built, a large edifice, erected for a Mariners' Lodge, was purchased by the friends of the Rev. J. Knight, and neatly fitted up as a place of worship. The place was capable of holding about three hundred and fifty persons, and was publicly opened on the 5th of March, 1805; Mr. Buck, Mr. Townsend, Mr. George Clayton, and Mr. Simpson, of Hoxton, assisting on the occasion. For some time it was supplied by the students from Hoxton Academy, and at the close of the year 1806, Mr. Thomas Cloutt, from that academy, was ordained pastor of this small Independent Church. This place was an asylum to the church and congregation of Mulberry Gardens, for prayer and church meetings, during the interval when the managers of that day set aside all the rules of Church government which Mr. Nicholson had formed, and to which they had cordially assented: this matter was ultimately settled by the High Court of Chancery. The Independent cause in Pell-street meeting became extinct about ten years since. The building was put up for sale at the Auction Mart, when, fearing it might fall into the hands of persons who would employ it for works of the devil, Mr. Stoddart, the present minister of Lady Huntingdon's Chapel, purchased it, where, since that time, the Gospel has been occasionally, and is now statedly, preached: it is only about twelve yards from the present Mulberry Gardens Chapel.

Mr. Nicholson dying in June, 1807, the chapel was supplied by a variety of ministers till the October of the following year, when the Rev. Robert Stoddart, of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, was publicly recognised as the stated pastor. He had commenced his labours in 1807, and was unanimously chosen by the church and congregation the first Sabbath in May 1808, when the sense of the church was taken by the Rev. W. F. Platt, of Holywell Mount. Mr. Stoddart was not publicly recognised until the October following, in consequence of his intended marriage with the daughter of the late Robert Hood, Esq., of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, who, at his decease, left £100l. to Cheshunt College, and gave the freehold ground, and was principally instrumental in the erection of the neat and commodious chapel, capable of containing eight hundred persons, in the Postern,* at Newcastle, where the Rev. J. Browning, (afterwards of Wrington,) became the pastor. At the public recognition of Mr. Stoddart, Mr. Gould, of Stratford, began with prayer; Mr. Young, now of Margate, then resident minister of her Ladyship's chapel at Canterbury, preached to the minister and people, from Col. ii. 5-7, which sermon was afterwards published.

Mr. Stoddart's introduction into the ministry and to the Mulberry Gardens Chapel was remarkable. Mr. Nicholson, while classical and divinity tutor at Lady Huntingdon's College, after the loss of an affectionate partner, fell into a state of nervous debility, and was advised by his medical attendant to try his native air in Cumberland, particularly desiring him to go by sea to Newcastle. Some days after his arrival at that place, there being but few students at College, he inquired if there was any young man in the Church who exhorted in the neighbouring villages? Mr. Stoddart was mentioned to him as one who usually exhorted the pitmen in the collieries at High Cross, where numbers of them resided. Mr. Nicholson sent for Mr. Stoddart, and from the simple narrative of his labours he was deeply affected, even to tears, and said, "I think I see my errand in coming here; I will write to the trustees of the College, and, if you please, you shall go with me when I return from Cumberland." Mr. Nicholson returned to London by sea, and was accompanied by Mr. Stoddart.

"But for him (says he) probably I should never have seen London. I was his last student at the College. The wonderful dispensation of

* By a fatal mismanagement in London, this chapel was lost to the Connexion some time ago.

Providence in bringing me to the Mulberry Gardens Chapel, are still marvellous in my eyes. So deeply was it impressed upon the mind of Mr. Nicholson, that he again and again repeated to the elders and deacons of that chapel my history; and the consequence was, an invitation given me to supply after his decease a people entirely unknown to me! It was truly said that the last days of that man of God were the best of all his days. The painful dispensation of Providence made him truly learned; he had indeed the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to them who were weary and faint on the way. His ministry, in the conversion of sinners, was eminently successful; his life was holy, and his death triumphant."

A short time previous to the opening of the Mulberry Gardens Chapel, and whilst Lady Huntingdon was in actual treaty for the Pantheon, in Spafields, Mr. Toplady, then resident in London, as minister of Orange-street Chapel, directed her attention to Richmond, then a place of fashionable resort for the great and the gay of the metropolis. The Rev. Rowland Hill, Mr. Joss (of the Tabernacle), and the Rev. Mr. West, a very popular clergyman, then in London, made at this time frequent preaching excursions to Richmond, where they encountered most violent opposition.* The theatre was the place where they preached; but the proprietor, a Mr. Waldren, being desirous of disposing of it to Lady Huntingdon, commissioned a Mr. Hough to wait on Mr. Toplady, with a view to negotiate the matter.

"The proprietor (says Mr. Toplady) is desirous of throwing it into your Ladyship's hands, if you think it a desirable object, and if terms can be agreed on. Mr. Hough will call on me again, in hopes of receiving your Ladyship's general answer; to which, if in the affirmative (that is, if you think proper to treat), he will reply by laying the conditions of the purchase before you. The Lord sway your mind according to his own infinitely wise and blessed will!"

The purchase of the theatre seems not to have met with Lady Huntingdon's approbation. The only notice which we can now obtain of this affair, is contained in a letter to Mr. Shirley, which he communicated to Mr. Toplady:—

"I have prayed for light (says her Ladyship), but the cloud does not move towards Richmond. The opposition which Mr. Hill and others have experienced is very discouraging. Consult with dear Mr. Toplady, and look earnestly for directions from above. May your

* On one occasion, an attempt had been made to persuade Mr. Hill not to go to Richmond, because a party of young men had hired a boat, and were coming down the river with the determination to draw him through the water. His feelings may be conceived, when informed the boat was upset, and that the poor misguided enemies of his ministry had all entered into the presence of their Judge in another world.

great Master guide you in this matter ! My mind is against it, but I am content to submit to your better judgment ; persuaded, that if it is his will who governs all things, we shall be sent to Richmond with full authority to proclaim his grace, and make his name more known amongst that people."

The number of places of worship in connexion with the Countess had now considerably multiplied ; and, ever devising plans for the diffusion of the Gospel in places where Satan had his seat, her attention was directed, towards the close of the year 1776, to a large building in Spafields, then known as the Pantheon, from its having some resemblance to the heathen Temple of that name, and which had been erected as a place of amusement, especially on the Lord's-day. It now became, but did not long remain unoccupied. Several letters passed between her Ladyship and Mr. Toplady, who, with Mr. Shirley, David Parker, Esq., and the Rev. Anthony Crole, minister of Pinners' Hall, were the chief agents in this affair. The multiplicity of business which crowded upon her Ladyship, was at this time extraordinary :—

"From the little engagements (writes Mr. Toplady,) with which I have been lately conversant, at your Ladyship's desire, I can form some adequate idea of the labours you have been enabled to sustain in promoting the cause of God. Had less than Almighty power been with you, you could not possibly have been brought thus far. And He, who has loved and supported you till now, will love, and uphold, and direct you to the end.

"After acknowledging the receipt of the two important letters with which your Ladyship has honoured me, I am to acquaint you with the state of the business to which they refer. On Wednesday last, the 30th instant, Messrs. Shirley, Parker, and Crole held a Cabinet council in my study, relative to the conditions, importance, and probable consequence of engaging that place as a stand for the Gospel. Two parties, I find, have it in their eye for themselves, viz.: Mr. William Taylor and Mr. Herbert Jones, (both of them awakened Clergymen,) who wish to erect it into a chapel on their own account, and at their own joint expense, and also another, who wants it for the purpose of a tavern. Mrs. Mc Kenzie informs me (for I have not been able to meet her husband at home) that Mr. Mc Kenzie and his partner in the proprietorship, are on the point of concluding a final agreement with one or other of the above-mentioned bidders; and fears that, unless your Ladyship returns an immediate and decisive answer, the opportunity of letting, or of selling it to either of them, will be lost, as they wish to come to a speedy conclusion, off or on. I craved a fortnight's further patience, and believe I have succeeded. Your Ladyship, therefore, will please to determine as soon as you can ; and to signify that determination without delay. The expenses of the Pantheon will be very great. To fit it up as a chapel, will not, according

to the moderate computation of Mr. Parker, cost less than 400*l.*; he says, he should not wonder if it turned out to be nearer 500; nor should I wonder if it should actually amount to 600. The stated outgoings, afterwards, will be at least 400*l.* per annum more. With regard to the place where the Pantheon stands, I am humbly of opinion that the situation is much to its disadvantage. It seems too large a place of worship to be well attended, unless it stood more in town. The ways to it, likewise, are none of the best, especially in winter. Consider also, the supply of constant and able ministers which such a chapel would require. Where are they to be had? Moreover, a doubt, (started by Mr. Parker,) is not without its weight; viz., would your Ladyship choose to have an ostensible connexion with the Tabernacle and Tottenham ministers? If in the affirmative, the Pantheon pulpit must be open to them. If in the negative, it may be considered as a chapel set up in opposition to them. Many, according to Mr. Parker, already begin to tattle and complain, as if this was the proposed design.

"On the whole, dear Mr. Shirley gave me, as his private opinion, that your Ladyship had better forego the Pantheon entirely."

Discouraged by the timid advice of Mr. Toplady and Mr. Shirley, Lady Huntingdon declined engaging the Pantheon at this time. In thus doing, her Ladyship acted contrary to her own convictions, and what she conceived the leadings of Divine Providence.

"My heart (says she) seems strongly set upon having this temple of folly dedicated to Jehovah Jesus, the great Head of his church and people. Dear Mr. Berridge does not discourage the undertaking, but says I may count upon a fit of sickness, if I engage in this affair. I feel so deeply for the perishing thousands in that part of London, that I am almost tempted to run every risk; and though at this moment I have not a penny to command, yet I am so firmly persuaded of the goodness of the Master whose I am, and whom I desire to serve, that I shall not want gold or silver for the work. It is his cause; he has the hearts of all at his disposal, and I shall have help when he sees fit to employ me in his service. Nevertheless, with some regret, I give up the matter at this time. You are on the spot, and your opinion in circumstances of this nature may be better than mine, but faith tells me to *go forward*, nothing fearing, *nothing doubting*."

When Lady Huntingdon's determination was communicated by Mr. Toplady to the proprietor of the Pantheon, it was immediately taken by a company of gentlemen, who engaged the Rev. Herbert Jones, Chaplain to the Misericordia Hospital, and the Rev. William Taylor, A.M., Fellow of Magdalen College, Cambridge, and Domestic Chaplain to the Earl of Marchmont, to carry on the worship of God in that place. Some months' delay was necessarily incurred in fitting it up as a place of worship, and considerable expense was incurred by the com-

mittee in the internal arrangements and embellishments of the chapel.

It was first opened on Saturday, July 5th, 1777, by the Rev. John Ryland, sen., of Northampton, who preached an admirable sermon on the occasion. The next day, Sunday, July 6th, Mr. Jones preached a very judicious sermon on the appropriate text, Gen. xxviii. 19. "And he (Jacob) called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first." This sermon was afterwards published, and likewise an excellent collection of hymns, mostly selected from Lady Huntingdon's and the Tabernacle collections, for the use of the congregation of "Northampton chapel." Not long after it was opened, it became an eyesore to that avaricious pluralist, the Rev. William Sellon, Minister of St. James's, Clerkenwell, father of Mr. Serjeant Sellon.*

Insatiate after lucre, and complaining of the blessed work of ministering as if it had been Egyptian bondage, it was not surprising that he should condemn the fidelity of Mr. Jones and Mr. Taylor for seeking the salvation of those souls whom he never felt a care to save. However disunited in sentiment, divided by party, and each eager to seize the golden prize before his fellow, here mere worldly ministers are unanimous. Does there arise among them a faithful servant of a crucified Lord—unweariedly labouring for the souls he died to save—instant in season and out of season, employing his time and his talents to warn the unruly, to undeceive the formal, to awaken the dead in trespasses, inform the ignorant, convince the dubious, confirm the wavering, and strengthen the unfaithful—whose disinterested labours have one object only in view, that the Lamb of God might be glorified, and miserable sinners plucked as brands from the burning—every heart kindles against him, every tongue is envenomed with gall; falsehoods, the most improbable and absurd, are forged, believed, propagated, delighted in; conviction, so far from being sought, is shunned; and men of candour in every other cause refuse in this the evidence of truth, and join in the general cry.

The preaching of Mr. Jones and Mr. Taylor attracted considerable attention, and a numerous congregation thronged every part of this spacious edifice. They stood for some time, as it were, alone in the Church, in that part of London, and,

* Few clergymen have possessed greater Church preferment, under the same circumstances, than Mr. Sellon, who had fifteen hundred a year without any patron but popular adoption. He was proprietor and preacher at Portland Chapel, joint Evening Preacher at the Magdalen, and alternate Afternoon Lecturer of St. Andrew, Holborn, and St. Giles's in the Fields.

according to our ideas of Gospel truth, we know not any other men in that neighbourhood who distinguished themselves with like labours, zeal, and fidelity. Mr. Sellon, whose hand on this occasion was first in the transgression, fired with envy and resentment, that in thus saying and doing they reproached him also, conspired to remove them from their sphere of usefulness. A paper was extensively circulated through the parish, in which Mr. Sellon claimed the privilege of preaching in the chapel whenever he pleased—the right of nominating the chaplains who should officiate there—and formally demanding the sacramental and all other moneys arising from the sittings and other sources to be paid to him; and, on pain of non-compliance, the ministers and committee were threatened with proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Courts.

These unreasonable claims were resisted with firmness by the proprietors, who circulated the following statement through the parish:—

“NORTHAMPTON CHAPEL.

“Whereas the Rev. William Sellon, Curate of the Parish of St. James, Clerkenwell, hath endeavoured to prejudice the inhabitants of the said Parish against the proprietors of Northampton Chapel, by insinuating amongst them that the said proprietors have broken their agreement, forfeited their word, and injured him in his property; therefore the proprietors think it incumbent on them to lay before the parishioners the substance of the Articles proposed and offered by Mr. Sellon, but which, never being signed, could not possibly be agreed to, and we doubt not, but after a fair and candid examination of the following Articles, with the Remarks, every parishioner will discover his intentions.”

On July 3, 1777, about twelve o'clock, these Articles were sent to the proprietors of Northampton Chapel with a message, requesting that they should be signed within *three hours*:—

I. That Mr. Sellon and his successors, the Curates of the Parish of St. James, Clerkenwell, shall have the right of nominating the Ministers of the said Chapel, and of appointing a Clerk, who should receive of the proprietors 12*l.* per annum.

REMARK.—The last clause of this Article, namely, the appointment of a Clerk, Mr. Sellon consented to withdraw.

II. That Mr. Sellon and his successors shall have full right and liberty, without any let or hindrance, to read prayers, preach, and administer the Sacraments, when and as often as he or they shall think proper.

REMARK.—Had the proprietors agreed to this Article, it is plain it would have been in the power of Mr. Sellon to have shut out the nominated Ministers from preaching at all.

III. That the proprietors shall pay to Mr. Sellon 40*l.* per annum, in consideration of his appointing William Taylor and Herbert Jones to be preachers in the said Chapel during life or their continuance; and if, after the death of either of them, Mr. Sellon should nominate a successor without the consent of

the proprietors, then Mr. Sellon should receive but 20*l.* per annum from that time.

REMARK.—This Article fully declares that Mr. Sellon's consent to admit those whom he contemptuously terms Methodists to preach in his parish, was to be attained by the lure of worldly gain; though now, as he has no emolument from the Chapel, he persecutes them for conscience' sake.

IV. That the proprietors shall pay 8*l.* 8*s.* per annum to the Clerk of the said parish.

REMARK.—This Article was lessened from the first demand, which was 10*l.* 10*s.* to the Churchwardens, and 5*l.* 5*s.* to the Clerk, per annum.

V. That the money collected at the Sacrament shall be received by the Churchwardens of the parish, or by whom they should appoint.

VI. That four sermons in the year, for the benefit of the children of the charity school of the said parish, shall be preached in the chapel.

VII. That no corpse shall be buried in the chapel, or in the ground adjoining thereto.

VIII. That for the due performance of the above Articles, the proprietors shall agree to sign a bond for *one thousand pounds*.

REMARK.—At the time the above Articles were proposed to be signed, the bond was not drawn up, the proprietors, therefore, could not consent to an agreement for signing the Articles till they were acquainted and satisfied with the contents of the bond, which might indeed be drawn much more to the disadvantage of the proprietors than the above Articles specify. We, therefore, leave the parishioners to judge whether the proprietors could in honesty to themselves have consented to be bound in a bond of 1000*l.* to give away their property and privileges to Mr. Sellon. If Mr. Sellon can dispute the truth of the above Articles, he would oblige the parishioners in general by publishing his own account of the affair.

Irritated by the resistance offered by the proprietors of Northampton Chapel, Mr. Sellon instituted a suit in the Consistorial Court of the Bishop of London,—a remnant of Popish and tyrannical power. To that Spiritual Court, for such is its title, Mr. Jones and Mr. Taylor were cited, to answer for their irregularity in preaching in a place not episcopally consecrated, and for carrying on Divine worship there, contrary to the wish of the minister of the parish. Verdicts were obtained against them, and they were suspended from preaching there. Thus this persecuting man prevailed, and had the momentary gratification of closing the chapel, and dispersing the numerous congregation that had been collected.

Encouraged by Mr. Berridge, Lady Huntingdon lost no time in repairing to London to prosecute a plan which she had long entertained, and for the completion of which she so ardently longed. Lord Dartmouth was then in London, and, with the late John Thornton, Esq., was very active in furthering her wishes. At the Tabernacle-house there was a long conference on the subject between Mr. Keene, Lord Dartmouth, Mr. Thornton, the Rev. Anthony Crole, and her Ladyship; and it was finally agreed that she should become the proprietor of Northampton Chapel:—

“Blessed be God (says her Ladyship) for the ability and strength

which has been given me in the prosecution of this affair. Opposition is to be expected from that unhappy man; but the Lord, whose we are, and whom we serve, will make us more than courageous, and cause his name and the unsearchable riches of his grace to triumph over all the malice and vain opposition of his enemies. O, pray that His presence may be with us at the dedication, and the power of his arm revealed in the conversion of sinners to himself! My eye is directed to this ultimate and only end of all my labours."

Lord Dartmouth and Mr. Thornton accompanied her Ladyship to Northampton Chapel, with a view to suggest improvements and alterations. The place is of a circular form, with a neatly ornamented dome, and two galleries, one above the other, supported by small columns, capable of accommodating a very numerous congregation. The name was changed to that of "Spafields Chapel," and was re-opened in the connexion of the Countess of Huntingdon on the 28th of March, 1779, by one of her Ladyship's chaplains, the Rev. Dr. Haweis, rector of All Saints, Aldwinkle, Northamptonshire, who preached a powerful and impressive sermon to an overflowing congregation, from 1 Cor. i. 23, 24, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

This was a formidable undertaking for Lady Huntingdon, whose private fortune was already fully engaged in meeting the various expenses attendant on the extensive exertions then making for the diffusion of the Gospel of Christ. The times were peculiar. The favourite aphorism of the devoted *Carey*, of more recent days, seems to have been ever before the eyes of the devoted foundress of the connexion—EXPECT GREAT THINGS, AND ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS. Depending on the Lord for aid, the Gospel standard was here unfurled; the result need not be stated—it has been glorious.

As a peeress of the realm, the Countess supposed she had a right to employ her own chaplains at any time and place in the most public manner. In this, however, she was soon undeceived; for Mr. Sellon, who most justly merited the appellation of Sanballat, renewed his attack, not against the place, but against every clergyman whom her Ladyship engaged to preach there. On this question being agitated in the Ecclesiastical Courts, it was decided against her Ladyship, and Dr. Haweis and Mr. Glascott, being ministers of the Church of England, were obliged to discontinue their services. Harassed and tormented by this unreasonable opposition, Lady Huntingdon sought the

highest legal advice, and forwarded the following queries, to be submitted to the judgment of Mr. Serjeant Glynn:—

“Is the domestic chapel of a peer of this realm exempt from ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and licensed?”

“What constitutes such domestic chapel? Is it sufficient that it be contiguous with the house or usual residence of such peer, and that divine service be performed, according to the Church of England, by a regularly ordained minister?”

“May such chapel be open to any besides his immediate domestics, if such peer pleases to admit them?”

“Must the clergyman, so officiating, necessarily be registered in the Commons; or is an appointment under such peer’s hand and seal, with or without a pecuniary appointment for his services, necessary to constitute him legally qualified for such ministry?”

“If he is cited into the Commons for such exercise of his ministry, can he refuse to appear? Will his plea, as domestic chaplain to such peer, be sufficient bar to further proceedings? Can the cause be carried into the King’s Bench or House of Lords?”

“Is it necessary that such chapel should be registered in the Bishop’s Court?”

These queries were returned to Lady Huntingdon with the legal opinion of John Glynn, Esq., Serjeant at Law, afterwards Recorder of London, a leading man at that time at the English bar. His letter to her Ladyship will be read with much interest at the present day, as strikingly prophetic of much that has occurred in our times:—

“Madam,—I duly appreciate the honour you have conferred upon me, by selecting me for your legal adviser. Permit me to sympathize with you on the unjust and ungracious treatment you have received from the Rev. Mr. Sellon. That a man, wearing the sacred garb—a minister, whose office it is to preach ‘peace and good-will to mankind’—should be guilty of such unreasonable conduct, such determined avariciousness, and such detestable tyranny, is lamentable and disgustingly revolting. In the notes to the queries which your Ladyship did me the honour to transmit to me for my inspection, you will perceive there are great difficulties in your way. Ecclesiastical law, *such as it now stands*, is against you in some points—points which would not be insurmountable, were our Bishops differently minded; but I regret to say, the spirit and temper of too many of our ecclesiastical rulers is very unfavourable to any liberal or tolerant system; so that nothing can be expected from a set of men in whom the desire for gain is so deeply rooted, and who seem so determined on all occasions to crush the spirit of inquiry, free opinion, and liberty of conscience. I anxiously look for reformation in some matters connected with the Established Church, to which I am conscientiously attached; and though I may not live to see any great change, yet I am persuaded the time is not far distant when Bishops will deeply lament the

obstinate, headstrong tyranny, which has driven so many from the Church, and that persecuting spirit so prominent in their characters, in too many instances more in accordance with the dark, intolerant spirit of the Romish Church, than with the enlightened principles of the Protestant faith.

“Your Ladyship’s benevolent conduct must command the respect and veneration of every liberal-minded man. I shall be most happy at all times in giving my humble aid to the furtherance of your most excellent designs for the good of mankind, and the improvement of the ignorant multitude. My professional services are ever at your Ladyship’s command. I have the honour to be, Madam, your much obliged, humble servant,

“JOHN GLYNN.”

CHAPTER XLIV.

Ecclesiastical Courts—Letters from Lady Huntingdon—Secession of Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor—Mr. Romaine’s advice to Dr. Haweis—Letters from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Rowland Hill—Lady Huntingdon’s difference with Mr. Hill—Welsh Association—Letters to Lady Huntingdon—Letter from her Ladyship—Surrey Chapel—Lady Huntingdon’s liberality—Mr. Piercy—Mr. Venn—Sir Richard Hill—Mr. Scott—Sion Chapel—Letter to the Committee of Spafields Chapel—Remarkable Conversions—Missionary Ordination.

BILLS having been found against Dr. Haweis and the Rev. Cradock Glascott in the Ecclesiastical Courts, actions were carried on and verdicts obtained, by which they were prohibited from officiating at the Spafields chapel. A citation was also procured against Mr. Wills, who had resigned the curacy of St. Agnes, near Truro, and had entered the Connexion of the Countess of Huntingdon; but he left London on the very day on which it was to have been served. To Mr. Wills succeeded Mr. Taylor, but his ministry was of short duration, owing to the former inhibition. These repeated persecutions induced Lady Huntingdon to devise a plan whereby a stop might be put to the malicious measures of Mr. Sellon:—

“This cruel and bitter enemy of mine (says her Ladyship, in a letter to Mr. Piercy, dated December 23, 1781,) is suffered to go great lengths of oppression; but herein also I must see life arise through death. Should further citations come, I am not able to support the dispute, however unjustly determined by a court that has no legal authority. This I must patiently endure while power conquers right.

In this case, *I am reduced to turn the finest congregation, not only in England, but in any part of the world, into a* **DISSENTING MEETING**, unless by the medium of secession. This is a subject, in considering which nothing but the very clearest convictions of conscience, impressed by the Holy Ghost for the continued protection of the truth, and faithfulness to God's people, ought to make a point *worth any minister's attending to*. As He who sees in heart, sees this to be the faithful testimony of my purest conscience, so I do affectionately beg that no suggestions I may advance may have influence, but such as immediately occur to your own mind.

"Episcopacy never will be established in America according to the present or any reasonable prospect. The reformed churches are too well guarded against ecclesiastical authority, and a more liberal devised idea from experience has now become almost universal. Our ministers, then, must come recommended by that neutrality between Church and Dissent-secession. Such ministers could supply any work that opened, yet not be obnoxious to either party; while by preaching and practice they maintained the doctrines of the Reformation. These sentiments have best secured my approval in this day of necessity; indeed, the present degeneracy of the clergy, who profess the Gospel, proves this the only way to preserve the Reformation from that apostacy into which it is falling by their means. Little, weak, and insufficient as I account my light among others, this becomes the only noble and honest testimony I can bear for Jesus Christ, in this day of rebuke and blasphemy; and for the strength and support of the honest, simple, and devoted souls who were no better preserved from lapsing into the increasing declension of faith and holiness. My reasons you have the fullest right to, that I may thus commend myself to your conscience in the sight of God; and thus willingly suffer all things, looking every honest man in the face, for Jesus Christ's sake, as void of offence towards God and man.

"The next term, when the other citations must come, and with them the great weight of artillery against me, I must beg your earliest notice. I suppose this to be about the 10th of next month. My present great load is on Mr. Glascott's account; but, alas! where shall we find the Gospel, except under the affliction that is its sure handmaid? Be it so: the soul is thus preserved blameless, waiting for the Lord's coming. Then we shall be able to say, 'This is enough—no more sin *now*—no more sorrow *now*!' Then the chaunts of everlasting life and liberty, and the Saviour's love, will fill heaven with acclamations of the spirits of the perfect then in glory."

To avoid all further molestation, it was unanimously resolved to take shelter under the Toleration Act. Mr. Wills having consulted with Mr. Taylor, who had joined Lady Huntingdon's Connexion after his expulsion from the chapel, they agreed for *themselves* to secede from the Established Church, took the oaths of allegiance as Dissenting ministers, and retained such part of the Church service as is allowed to the Dissenters by the

canons. Mr. Wills was appointed minister of the chapel, and the worship of God was carried on from that time with uninterrupted peace and harmony.

Many censorious reflections were passed on the conduct of Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor, and many professors, as well out of the Establishment as in it, spoke hard speeches against them, as introducing a new schism into the Church of Christ. Their vindication, addressed to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England, is inserted in the note below.*

Hitherto it had not been generally understood how far the

* "We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, beg leave with all humility and due respect to inform your Lordships that we have for some time past been engaged in the service of the chapels belonging to the Countess Dowager of Huntingdon; apprehending that those places of worship, under the protection of her Ladyship as a peeress of the realm, were in nowise contrary to the laws, ecclesiastical or civil.

"But whereas, by a late decision in the Consistorial Court of the Bishop of London, it appears that her Ladyship cannot authorise us to officiate in her chapels in the public manner wherein we have been accustomed to exercise our ministry, we perceive ourselves (as long as we continue in the Established Church) reduced to the necessity of knowingly and wilfully opposing the laws of that church whereof we at present are ministers, or of withdrawing our services from the various congregations to whom we have ministered for a long season, and trust we have, by the blessing of God, been made useful. But as we cannot take either of these steps with a good conscience, nor submit to those ecclesiastical canons that would prevent the discharge of the ministerial commission we have received from God and man to the fullest extent; and yet desire from principle (as we have invariably done from our ordination) to spread and maintain faithfully the fundamental doctrines contained in the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy of the Church of England through the various parts of the kingdom, as we have opportunity; we think there is no alternative left but for us to secede or withdraw peaceably from the Established Church, and under the protection of the Toleration Act, continue to maintain her doctrines, though we cannot in all things submit to her discipline. And this we desire to do, not from a factious or schismatical spirit, not from a design to propagate heresies in the Church of God, nor from any sinister or lucrative motives whatsoever; but for a simple view of glorifying God, of preaching the Gospel, and of being useful to our fellow-creatures, in that way which is most agreeable to our own consciences, and which we humbly conceive to be the most calculated for the general good of those many thousands that attend the ministry of ourselves and of those connected with us. And as great indulgences have lately been given by the legislature to religious persons of various denominations, to worship God in the way most agreeable to their consciences, we flatter ourselves our conduct will give the less offence in this land of liberty to our superiors in the Church and State, especially as we determine to maintain the doctrines of the former, and in all things desire to acquit ourselves as faithful and dutiful subjects belonging to the latter.

"We will not trouble your Lordships any further than by observing, that we have no other view in this address than to declare simply our resolutions and our motives thereunto; and in this our secession (to which we are compelled more by necessity than by choice) to acquit ourselves not only in a manner consistent with our open and uniform conduct hitherto, but in such a way as should appear most respectful to your Lordships as governors of the Established Church; humbly beseeching the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls to direct and bless your Lordships in all such undertakings as shall be most for the glory of God and the good of the Church,

"THOMAS WILLS,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR."

privilege of a peeress extended; but the trials which took place in the Consistorial Court of London, respecting Spafields chapel, first decided the character of her Ladyship's chapels, as dissenting places of worship. Conscientious clergymen were, at the period of the events now under our notice, painfully circumstanced. On the one hand, multitudes in every neighbourhood were perishing in ignorance; on the other, the regulations of the Established Church forbade them stepping across the boundaries of a parish, to save a soul from death; the result was that many, though sincerely attached to the Church of England, preferred what seemed to them the lesser evil, and preached beyond the limits of their own parishes, but generally without incurring ecclesiastical penalties. The excuse made by the venerable Berridge, when interrogated by his diocesan for preaching out of his own parish, is well known. "Why, my Lord, I see many parsons playing at bowls, and going a-hunting out of their own parishes, yet they meet with no reproofs; why should I be blamed more than they?"

The itinerant and *irregular* labours of a Whitefield, a Berridge, a Grimshaw, a Wills, a Glascott, and others, must not be rashly censured, for God was with them.

These litigations in the Consistorial Court were the means of withdrawing from the service of her Ladyship's Connexion Messrs. Romaine, Venn, Townsend, Jesse, and others, though they continued in the most cordial intimacy with her and those who continued to serve her chapels.* Yet by the labours of Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor, and the occasional assistance of Dr. Haweis, Mr. Glascott, Mr. Bradford, Mr. Jones, Mr. Piercy, Mr. Pentycross, Mr. Charles, and other ministers in the Established Church, many of the most abandoned and obstinate rebels against Christ and his Gospel were compelled to lay down the weapons of their rebellion. Under all her cares and trials, this animated the heart of the venerable Countess to still greater exertions.

"Long have I been looking (she says) for some release to indulge

* When Lady Huntingdon, without the knowledge of Dr. Haweis, made him her trustee and executor, leaving him (with others) the whole of her numerous chapels, &c., the worthy Doctor went to Mr. Romaine, and was by him assured that if he had been similarly honoured he would have accepted the trust; adding, "your matters will be better conducted than if in any other hands." "May I say that Mr. Romaine gave me that advice?" said Dr. Haweis; and the venerable brother of Blackfriars answered, "With my free leave, and more than that, I will vindicate the step: you will always find me the same, and though I may not now give you my help, you will always be welcome to my pulpits, and receive every token of my fraternal regard." He kept his word, for Dr. Haweis often preached at Blackfriars, and so did Mr. Wills, even when minister of her Ladyship's chapel at Spafields.

your friends, and to have you share in the blessed success of the Gospel that daily surrounds us. It is great indeed ; but persecutions are each hour arising against me, and only at me seems all the bitterness expressed. All the other Connexions seem to be at peace ; and I have ever found belonged to me while we were *at ease in Zion*. I am to be cast out of the Church now, *only for what I have been doing these forty years*—SPEAKING AND LIVING FOR JESUS CHRIST ! and if the days of my captivity are now to be accomplished, those that turn me out, and so set me at liberty, may soon feel what it is, by sore distress themselves, for those hard services they have caused me. Blessed be the Lord, I have not one care relative to this event, but to be found exactly faithful to God and man through all. You will smile and rejoice with me in all I may suffer for our dear Immanuel's sake. I have asked none to go with me—and none that do not come willingly to the help of the Lord, and by faith in the Son of God lay all at his feet—any other would do me no good, and He only knows these. But Mr. Wills, Mr. Glascott, and Mr. Taylor, offered themselves willingly for the people against the mighty ; and may the evil pronounced against Meroz belong to none I know ! * * *

“Dear Mr. Haweis, Wills, &c., are mightily owned and blessed of God in the conversion of sinners. The chapel is crowded from door to door, and multitudes go away disappointed at not being able to get in. Mr. Sellon is in a mighty rage with Mr. Sergeant Glynn for what he terms ‘his vile abuse of him.’ I am greatly indebted to him and other law officers of the Crown for their able advice and assistance in this affair. I have been severely handled and vilified ; but none of these things move me—determined the short remnant of my declining age shall be employed in setting up the standard, and enlarging the circle of evangelical light and truth. With the Lord's help I shall go on in devotedness to his work, and wait contentedly for his approbation when called to give up my accounts.”

It is a fault often to be lamented in modern biography, that while all the virtues of men of piety are blazoned forth as bright examples to follow, their failings are seldom exhibited as beacons, to warn us of the dangers of our course. The memory of the just is blessed ; and the memorials of them, which record their excellences, have the happiest tendency to rouse the spirit of emulation, to imitate or surpass what is so praiseworthy and of good report. But biographers too commonly, instead of giving a faithful picture of their subject, turn panegyrists, and raise suspicions of the truth of their report, by endeavouring to exalt men compassed with infirmities on such pedestals of perfection as dishearten, rather than excite to imitation. In fact, earth produces no such faultless monsters, and Christianity disclaims them. The Bible biography is of a quite different kind. Men as they are, not as they ought to be, are there described in their true character ; and the best of men, as but men at the

best. Nor is this without singular use; for had we only seen their bright side, we should probably have despaired, amidst the glare of their excellences, at finding how totally different the faithful tablet of conscience and memory held us up to ourselves. But when the shade of their faults, their follies, or their weaknesses softens down the features of Christian perfection into the true characteristic of man fallen but renewed, their very failures suggest grounds against despair under our own temptations and falls, and rouse the heart to fresh activity from the conviction, that great excellence is not incompatible with many infirmities.

Of every human being, it may be said, that amidst all his apparent graces and good qualities, God knows his heart; and if a faithful biographer were to describe everything which hath passed in his spirit or conduct with scrupulous fidelity, perhaps there is not a creature who ever existed that would submit the narrative to public view; conscious that it must, sometimes at least, excite disgust and abhorrence instead of love and veneration. Yet as to God alone we are responsible for the secrets of the soul, before his fellows every man's actions should be fairly stated: "*Et ubi plura nitent, paucis haud offendar maculis*—where many excellences shine resplendent, a few failings shall not offend." Let the falls or mistakes of others stand as landmarks for admonition, and their fidelity and devotedness rouse to more vigorous exertions.

Was Lady Huntingdon a perfect character? No! This is not the lot of mortals on this side the grave. When the moon walketh in her brightness, her shadows are most visible. She was in her temper warm and sanguine—her predilections for some, and her prejudices against others, were sometimes too hastily adopted—and by these she was led to form conclusions not always correspondent with truth and wisdom. The success attending her efforts seemed to impress her mind with a persuasion, that a particular benediction would rest upon whomsoever she should send forth, and rendered her choice not always judicious; though seldom were there ever less offences in so extended a work. She had so long directed the procedures of her Connexion, that she too seldom asked the advice of the judicious ministers who laboured with her; nor did she passively bear contradiction. This is the history of truth. She needs no posthumous fame to blazon her worth. She is past far beyond all human censure. The Great Head of the Church hath decided her character, pitied her infirmities, pardoned her iniquities, and welcomed her to glory with "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

Not long after the opening of Spafields chapel some unplea-

sant differences relative to the Welsh Association arose between Lady Huntingdon, Mr. Hill, and the trustees of the Tabernacle Connexion. Her Ladyship was one of Mr. Hill's earliest and best friends. At his first setting out she had paid him considerable attention. When under the frowns of his family, and an alien from his father's house,—when Sir Rowland and Lady Hill were so displeased with him that neither of them would answer any letter written by Lady Huntingdon to entreat for him,—in this season of distress, “he was (says her Ladyship) as my own son received into my house, preached in my pulpits, and, as far as I know, a single offence he never had given him.” “Though he always treated her memory with respect (says Mr. Sidney), and vindicated her character against aspersions during the Wesleyan controversy, I think he was not one of her Ladyship's most cordial admirers. The mode in which she exercised her authority was not suited to a mind impatient of restraint.”

The fact was, Mr. Hill had given very serious offence, not by opposing her party in argument, but by attacking them with wit and sarcasm, and holding the Countess up to ridicule. “All this (says she), though not fair or upright, I should have so far despised, as for peace sake to have passed over; but the worm that still lies at the bottom of the gourd, is his taking us all up into the pulpit, as his merry andrews, and, through his evil jokes, leaving a bitter sting behind.” Mr. Hill was the aggressor, and sought by various means to be restored to favour, when convinced of the impropriety and injustice of his proceedings. But the prejudice and suspicions of her Ladyship were not so easily done away with. “He has been in London (says she) to offer peace; and wanted to preach in our large congregations, and by getting in, bring nothing but division—but I have avoided this.” This was in the summer of 1781.

Her Ladyship was in Wales; but a friend wrote to her, saying,

“I have now seen that Scripture fulfilled—when a person's ways please the Lord, he maketh their enemies to be at peace with them. I have been talking with *two* of your Ladyship's principal ones, and I find them wishing to be your very humble servants. Mr. Hill is one. He says he will preach in the great Spafelds chapel, if your Ladyship will give him leave. The committee have been told of it, and they are well pleased, if you will but approve him. Mr. Keene says that he hopes your Ladyship will take them into favour again, and the Lord will make but one family of us all. He says it is his heart's desire to have your favour and friendship renewed. Indeed I believe that there is none of them happy without you. I hope the Lord will incline your heart to make peace.”

Lady Huntingdon's answer to the foregoing letter is dated

“College, July 10, 1781,” and is highly characteristic. She was then in her *seventy-fourth year*.

“Your letter, having followed me to the College, I have only received by this day’s post. I can want no assurances of yours or my faithful old friend; and you will both agree with me, ‘He that believeth, shall not make haste.’ This proposal for peace will never find any objection from me while it stands upon a foundation that the Lord himself, who is the Prince of Peace, makes, and who says, ‘The fruit of righteousness is peace, and the effects of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.’ What I see my duty as a poor servant in his household, and what most appears for my dear Master’s honour, and the greatest benefit of my beloved brethren and fellow-servants, that inviolable obligation I stand under, happen what will to my most unworthy self here on earth. The utmost love, union, and harmony now subsist among us in all our quarters; to hazard *that*, in the smallest degree, would bring my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. My Welsh friends are dear to me as my own soul—their voice on all occasions with mine, will be but one. Those with my dearest and faithful ministers eminent in abilities, zeal, and unbounded labours in God’s church, are likewise more precious to me than the whole creation could be made by every earthly comfort it could afford me. Thus their honour is sacred to me, and to maintain their peace and prosperity is my unceasing obligation. Nine of these must have the places they now have—six of those in close connexion, and three in heart with all their possible moments of services for us. Our aid is entreated all over England, and the wonderful blessings that follow dear Mr. Wills since the late revolution, taken for the services of this whole land, convince me of the very great consequences of giving any wrong touch to the ark of God. I tremble at this *in thought only*, and yet my proposals to prevent division and confusion would never be accepted. The pride of some, the interestedness of others, the selfishness of many, with the ignorance and vanity that are incident to all, prove that nothing but the Lord only, who subdues all things to himself, can accomplish this. Two points lie at the very threshold that will make all their wishes have an end at once. The first is, all in Wales to be delivered up in a kind and friendly spirit to the association—and next, the ministers universally to have the lead in the work wherever I am concerned, and this *only because* I know that I can honestly and honourably trust and depend upon their fidelity to the people, while with regard to any other how much I own I may wish to respect and show them marks of Christian regard, yet I cannot be supposed to place in them such important confidence. Without reserve to you, my kind friend, and with every best wish to dear Mr. Venn, Mr. Hill CANNOT preach *for me*. This must not be pressed. When we meet, I shall explain fully my present reasons. Should any future day prove it expedient, it may be considered, but be assured it cannot be now. Mr. Piercy will be succeeded at Spafelds by Mr. Phillipps, the master of the College, till some other of our ministers return from their four quarterly excursions round the kingdom. He is a gracious, worthy, and faithful minister, and is

received with great applause in all the churches in Wales. He preached at the chapel most sweetly last Sunday. He is not only sufficiently judicious for a critic to hear, but welcome to every heart that loves the Lord. Repeated Christian love to you and dear Mr. Venn, and to the committee. I am, my dear friend, as ever, your affectionate and faithful

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

The Rev. Rowland Hill was now in the zenith of his fame—in the brightest of those seventy years during which he preached the everlasting Gospel. Often had the church door been shut against him, and he had no fixed cure of his own in London. Thus was he driven into the vast chapels of Mr. Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon, or into the streets or fields. Among his more constant hearers were many who had amassed fortunes by integrity and industry, and they began to desire for their beloved preacher a suitable establishment. During the riots of 1780 Mr. Hill had preached to incalculable numbers in St. George's-fields, and with such power, that many had fled from political excitement to religious retirement, and, in memory of his successes on that spot, it was resolved to build a chapel there. In the centre of one of the most depraved districts of the metropolis Surrey Chapel was erected, a banner of the Cross was reared; precept and example of the pious flock had their effect on the careless multitude, many were excited to inquiry, others helped on to grace. The service of the new chapel was the ritual of the Church of England, and in *such spiritual forms of devotion, its original promoters framed the suitable expression of the outpourings of their minds in the public worship of God.* The pulpit was open to all preachers of the Gospel of any sect or country—a union to which all the actions of Mr. Hill's public life converged; for he was the zealous supporter of every institution that drew together men of different religious persuasions and collected their several powers in a common arena of action. The liberal contributors to the chapel permitted Mr. Hill to spend the summer months in travelling, or in his delightful retreat at Wotton, and were content to receive in the interim such supplies as he thought proper to appoint.

The first meeting was held on the 4th of February, 1752, when it was resolved that the chapel should stand in any eligible spot between the bridge and the obelisk, and that Mr. Hill should direct and provide ministers, so long as he should preach agreeably to the doctrinal Articles of the Church of England, and not give the pulpit to any one who was known to preach otherwise. Mr. Hill's position was remarkable; for while excluded from the chapels of the Countess of Huntingdon, the followers of Mr. Whitefield hailed him as the reviver of their

cause; he was beloved and honoured by the Wesleyans; and now was this chapel erected, in the list of the subscribers to which appeared the name of Lord George Gordon for the sum of £50.

The Rev. Mr. Berridge, of Everton, happening to be in London about the time the first meeting was held, thus communicated the intelligence to Lady Huntingdon:—

“I am persuaded (says he) your Ladyship will rejoice that dear Rowley is going, with the Lord’s help, to erect a standard for the Gospel in the very middle of the devil’s territories in London. What a bellowing and clamour the old enemy will make at this fresh invasion of his kingdom! But he may storm, and rage, and persecute—Christ’s cause must, and will prevail over every opposition men or devils can raise. A meeting has been held, and I am told the place fixed upon is one of the worst spots in London—the very paradise of devils. This much is satisfactory. Fine soil for ploughing and sowing! By and by, my Lady, we shall hear of the reaping time—the harvest—and the harvest home! How glorious will be the triumphs of the Gospel in that place! Some of the blessed fruits we may expect to meet in our Father’s kingdom above. I am now looking every day to hear that the foundation-stone has been laid, and the King of Zion consecrating the spot by the conversion of souls to himself. I need not remind your dear Ladyship to pour forth a volley of prayers for the success of this sanctuary.”

“Such (says the Countess) is the very reviving intelligence communicated by my worthy and excellent friend, Mr. Berridge. I, who have known Mr. Hill from his first setting out, can testify that no man ever engaged with more heartfelt earnestness in bringing captives from the strongholds of Satan, into the glorious liberty of the Gospel of our Immanuel; and it will require all the energies of his zealous and enterprising spirit to erect the standard of the Cross in that part of London where ignorance and depravity prevail to such an awful degree. Though I have seen sufficient cause to exclude him from serving in my chapels, *for the present*, yet I cordially rejoice in the success that has attended his faithful labours. I knew him when a youth at the University—when persecuted by his family—when in pecuniary distress—and he was as a son to me, received into my house, and preached for me every where. My heart’s desire and prayer to God is, that this undertaking may prosper most abundantly, and that very many souls may there be gathered to the true Shiloh, such as will be his joy and crown in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The venerable Countess not only approved the erection of Surrey chapel, but assisted it with a liberal subscription, and the first stone was laid on the 24th of June, 1782; when Mr. Hill addressed the vast assembly present from the words—“Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure

foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." Isaiah xxviii. 16.*

At the opening of the chapel a very serious occurrence had nearly happened. The building being erected on a marshy soil, the foundation was considered by some persons insecure, and, in the midst of the service, a false alarm was given that it was yielding to the pressure of the crowd. Mr. Hill entered the pulpit and endeavoured to persuade them that all their apprehensions were groundless, to prove which, he said he should remain there till the last, and begged them to stay quietly in their seats. Notwithstanding this, a general rush took place, and many, in their struggle to get out, were much injured.

The management of the affairs at Surrey chapel was vested in trustees; and Mr. Hill had the satisfaction to see his brother, Sir Richard, at the head of the directors of the concerns of this new and respectable congregation. Though the pulpit was supplied by ministers of various denominations during Mr. Hill's absence from London, his chief delight was in getting it occupied by his old clerical friends, Berridge, Pentycross, Venn, Jones, Charles, Wills, Haweis, and others, all of whom laboured in the chapels of Lady Huntingdon; and Mr. Piercy, by her Ladyship's consent, preached at the opening of Surrey chapel. When Mr. Hill could no longer obtain help from the Church, it gave him no little disquietude. The late worthy Mr. Venn, for a number of years, made one of the stated supplies at Surrey chapel. In the months of May and June, 1786, Mr. Venn visited London for a few weeks, and preached each Sunday at the chapel. The following extract from one of his letters refers to this visit:—

"I have crowded audiences. Many of the clergy are generally present. The sub-dean of the Chapel Royal was there last Sunday, and came into the vestry to speak to me. Mr. Cecil says I do very wrong to come for so short a time. He would persuade me to under-

* While the works were in progress, Mr. Hill frequently addressed the people drawn to them by curiosity. Several persons who attended the ceremony of laying the foundation stone, came to him to declare the impressions made on their minds, and to ask his advice. He used also to gather the children together when they came to play about the building, and after engaging their confidence by kind words, and by little presents of cake and fruit, he would talk to them of Jesus in the simplest and most affecting manner. Very much to his annoyance some individual published a sermon which professed to be the one delivered at the laying of the stone, though he disclaimed it in the daily papers; it was reviewed as his in the periodicals of the day, which held himself and his production up to ridicule. The publication of this spurious production induced Mr. Hill to print the sermon he preached at the opening of the chapel, in the summer of 1783, the title of which was "Christ crucified; the sum and substance of the Scriptures."

take for half the year. Vain would be the attempt, unless I kept a curate. Mr. Wilberforce has been at the chapel, and attends the preaching constantly. Much he has to give up ! and what will be the issue who can say ?

In a letter of June 22, 1790, he adds :—

“ On the 13th I took my final leave of the chapel, addressing myself to a great multitude, from Heb. x. 23 : ‘ Let us hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering : for He is faithful that promised.’ My work is nearly ended, for my mental faculties are very dull, and my bodily strength greatly reduced.”

The late Mr. Thomas Scott, Rector of Aston Sandford, Bucks, when chaplain at the Lock, used to exchange pulpits with Mr. Hill once a year ; that being the stipulated condition of his preaching a charity sermon for the Lock Hospital. The Rev. John Walker, one of the senior Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin, and many other eminent and excellent ministers of the Established Church, esteemed it a privilege to be invited to the pulpit of Surrey chapel, to diffuse the savour of that Name which they preached. It is not a little surprising, that many who think highly of these departed worthies, have, in the present day, become the apologists of what they are pleased to reckon their very objectionable irregularities ; witness the biographers of Romaine, Venn, Fletcher, and Scott. Sincere as their attachment was to the Established Church, and warm as their wishes were, and those of every good man must be, to see her a praise in the earth, they had ceased to be the dupes of bigotry and educational prejudices. These are traits which speak the true catholicism of these faithful men, and speak to their honour. Cowardice and a fear of offending, may make some desirous of sinking these striking features in their characters ; but we are bound to hold up their noble example for imitation, and cordially profess to have our lot and portion with these apostolic witnesses.

We now pass on to the history of Sion chapel. Lady Huntingdon, never weary in well-doing, and still devising plans for the diffusion of the Gospel, now determined to erect the standard of the Cross in a distant part of London, where there was little evangelical light at that time. The success attending the opening of Spafields chapel encouraged her to this arduous undertaking. The place was erected about the year 1785, and being intended for purposes of public amusement, was constructed accordingly. The proprietor, Mr. Jones, finding this speculation did not answer his expectations, offered it to Lady Huntingdon for a place of worship, and in 1790 granted her Ladyship a lease for the remainder of his term (78 years), at a rental of 130*l.* per

annum. No material alterations were deemed necessary; and it was perhaps proper to show by substantial and permanent signs the triumph of wisdom and goodness over folly and vice. The dressing-rooms for the actors were converted into a vestry, and the pulpit was erected on the front of the stage. The pit was designed for the poor, and the galleries for the more decent hearers of the word of life. The expense of fitting it up with pews, free seats, &c., was defrayed by the Countess, and cost 2,600*l*. The chapel was dedicated to the service of God on the 28th of November following, by the Rev. Dr. Ford, who preached in the morning; and the Rev. David Jones, rector of Langan, preached in the afternoon and evening. During her lifetime the chapel was supported by Lady Huntingdon, who confided its temporal government to Messrs. Bulwer, Clarke, Emerson, Gilbert, Hodson, Hinde, and Hicks, as a committee of managers, all of whom have followed their venerable patroness into eternity. After her Ladyship's decease, the cause began to languish, and it became necessary to have recourse to collections and the other usual means for its support. For many years the pulpit was filled by the ministers of the Connexion, who generally supplied for six weeks (similar to the plan still continued at Spafelds chapel), until the year 1812, when the Rev. Mr. McAll accepted an invitation to become their stated minister; but for some unknown cause their union was not of long duration, and the chapel was supplied with various ministers as before, until 1831, when the Rev. William Hodson became the settled pastor, and has laboured there ever since with increasing usefulness.

Sion chapel is situated immediately behind the eastern end of Whitechapel church. The external appearance of the building has nothing to recommend it: it appears to have been originally of a circular form, but by the addition of school-rooms and vestries, it presents an irregular shape externally. On entering the chapel at the front door, the visitor is struck with its capaciousness, and on descending a flight of steps enters the body of the chapel, which still retains its original name of "The Circle," having been used for feats of horsemanship, &c. It is about eighty-six feet in diameter, and contains six hundred free sittings for the accommodation of the poor. On the opposite side, behind the pulpit and desks, is what has been called "The Throne," (formerly the stage,) the pews of which are covered with scarlet: this part of the chapel is approached from the Circle by six or eight steps, and is forty-nine feet long by forty-five feet wide. The whole, as well as the Circle, is entirely

surrounded by galleries, and is capable of containing a congregation of several thousand persons.

Although much of the management of her chapels was vested by Lady Huntingdon in the committees appointed by her, she still retained considerable power in her own hands over those places. From time to time we find her addressing letters to the managers, as they were sometimes called, on the spiritual and temporal affairs of the congregations in connexion with her, directing the periods when collections should be made, and regulating the allowance for the maintenance of ministers. One of these letters will convey a just idea of the immensity of her labours, and the complicated nature of the machinery she was called to direct:—

“ To the respected Committee of Spafields Chapel.

“ My worthy Friends,—You must allow me to assure you that the pleasure I had in reading the conclusion of your letter did abundantly outweigh those many complaints, and, I hope, needless fears, which our gracious Lord is forced to try us by, and *that* in order that we may see the only hand worthy to expect our blessing from, and yield him all the praise. More I want not than to find our Lord own our assemblies as *his*. No good thing shall be withheld while the Lord of Hosts remains the tender father of us his Israel, and will afford us our meal in due season. I thought the shortest way to explain my thoughts was sending them as communicated to the Norwich committee, and fully agreed to by those of Bath and Bristol. I lament a complaint should come on Mr. Taylor’s account, and have sent a direction to provide for him from my own property, as no collection can be had at Tunbridge Wells, owing to the great poverty of the people. The income of an estate of mine has been ever freely given to support the Gospel in that part of Kent, with an allowance for the winter food of a student, as no minister can pay this out of what is received. Mr. Taylor cannot have more for his support for four months there than is allowed through all the churches; and in case of his absence, a minister is to be boarded by him, as is the student supported in part by the people all the winter. The purpose that is intended (and kindly so to me by you all) bears no proportion of difficulty to me, who only am the responsible person for the debt or deficiencies that may arise upon the chapel. I am still willing to trust my dear and faithful Master—he has dealt ever kindly by his poor old worthless servant, and I don’t find I want a better bank to maintain food and raiment for me, or those proper and just supplies he shall afford for his various little household, which he orders or may order for my ignorant care of them. As to the minister’s board, your allowance of two guineas a week just comes to what you have stated. As to a reader, we have no such example among us. The Gardens have one for the sake of the prayers when a student preaches, but no one minister has ever had a single difficulty; and, it appears to me, allowing the minister *ten guineas* who stays a

quarter with you, to find a reader if he likes, will be less expense than the burden of regularly maintaining one. Many choose to read the prayers; and I must say that the air of superiority and importance thus manifested has not that simplicity, that means neither show nor parade. The more apostolic we are, the better; and I must say, as a most remarkable blessing, I know of none anxious or discontented among us, even when it might justly have been excused, seeing myself unable to do what my heart so much desired. My best advice to you, is to be wisely cautious upon this point, and either collections or private subscriptions from honest and devoted hearts, privately applied to for this purpose (and this latter above all others to be preferred) as a little loan to the Lord, and not necessity, will go further to bless such means than the many affected shows supposed liberality wears. I am sure you expect a faithful answer from me, and ‘such as I have give I unto you all.’ Don’t be careful about the household stuff—my dear Master will not let me want table and chairs. You see where all my cares are cast, and even will also *well* end. Commending your gracious labours (for this our best friend) to Him whose faithful and tender eye is ever over you; with many earnest prayers for that beloved flock you so care for, and this as for my unworthy soul; I remain, my worthy friends, your faithful, willing, and every-ready friend and devoted servant,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

It is not the province of any historian to give the true history of her Ladyship’s chapels; that great day, “for which all other days were made,” will unfold the best history of those hallowed sanctuaries; for then it will be seen “that this and that man were born there.” More than half a century has elapsed since the joyful sound of salvation was first heard within the walls of those highly-favoured temples of God. During that period many a perishing outcast has there found peace and pardon—many a wandering prodigal has there said, “I will arise and go to my Father”—many a mourner has there exchanged the spirit of heaviness for the garment of praise—and many a fainting believer has there found fresh strength, and been enabled to rejoice in the God of his salvation. Thousands of immortal souls have been redeemed from death and destruction by the powerful ministry of her Ladyship’s chaplains; and, it is presumed, that there are but few of the many churches in London, and scarcely any in the eastern district of the vast metropolis, but have received members into Christian communion, who have, through the signal benediction of the Spirit, found these sanctuaries a directory to Him, “who is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour,” and whose “blood cleanseth from all sin.”

A man about to commit suicide was converted to peace by the preaching at Spafelds; and one of the preachers met, in

Edinburgh, a young man, who accosted him, and said he had heard him preach there:—

“Do you remember (said he) a note put up from an afflicted widow, begging the prayers of the congregation for the conversion of an ungodly son?” “I do very well remember such a circumstance.” “Sir (said he), I am the very person; and, wonderful to tell, the prayer was effectual. I was going on a frolic with some other abandoned young men one Sunday, through the Spafields, and, passing by the chapel, I was struck with its appearance, and hearing it was a Methodist chapel, we agreed to mingle with the crowd, and stop for a few minutes to laugh and mock at the preacher and people. We were but just entered the chapel, when you, Sir, read the note, requesting the prayers of the congregation for an afflicted widow’s profligate son. I heard it with a sensation I cannot express. I was struck to the heart; and though I had no idea that I was the individual meant, I felt the bitterness of a widow’s heart, who had a child as wicked as I knew myself to be.

“My mind was instantly solemnized, I could not laugh—my attention was riveted on the preacher. I heard his prayer and sermon with an impression very different from what had carried me into the chapel. From that moment the Gospel truths penetrated my heart; I joined the congregation; cried to God in Christ for mercy, and found peace in believing; became my mother’s comfort, as I had long been her heavy cross; and, through grace, have ever since continued in the good ways of the Lord. An opening having lately been made for an advantageous settlement in my own country, I came hither with my excellent mother, and, for some time past, have endeavoured to dry up the widow’s tears, which I had so oft caused to flow, and to be the comfort and support of her age, as I had been the torment and affliction of her former days. We live together in the enjoyment of every mercy, happy and thankful; and every day I acknowledge the kind hand of my Lord that ever led me to Spafields chapel.”

In 1780 this chapel narrowly escaped being pulled down by the rioters, who came from Clerkenwell Bridewell, and supposing it still belonged to Mr. Maberly, who had incurred their displeasure, they were going to demolish it; but being informed of this mistake, and that it belonged to the Countess of Huntingdon, and one of them (who was afterwards executed at Newgate,) also observing to the rest, that the place should be spared, because his mother went thither, on these considerations they desisted from their mischievous designs.

The first sermon preached before the directors of the Missionary Society was delivered at Spafields chapel, by the Rev. Dr. Haweis. The Rev. David Jones, Rector of Langan, preached for the same society at Sion chapel; it was also at this place that the missionaries destined for the South Sea

Islands received their solemn designation. Dr. Haweis presided on that occasion. Dr. Hunter, in his usual strain of eloquence, delivered a most impressive discourse; Dr. Williams, of Rotherham, addressed the missionaries (*twenty-nine* in number), standing round the communion rails, in a most able and judicious charge; and the Rev. John Walker, one of the senior Fellows of the University of Dublin, closed the solemnity with a most scriptural prayer, and full of animated devotion, suited to the occasion, finishing with the usual benediction, "The peace of God," &c.; after which, the congregation rose and united in such a song of praise as, perhaps, was never before heard—

" Captain of thine enlisted host,
Display thy glorious banner high."

CHAPTER XLV.

History of the Tabernacle at Norwich—Mr. Wheatley excluded the Methodist Connexion—Visits Norwich—Violent Persecution—Mr. Whitefield visits Norwich—Remarkable Conversion—Lady Huntingdon's attention attracted to Norwich—The Wesleys—Mr. Charles Wesley—Mrs. Colonel Galatin—The Tabernacle opened by Mr. Whitefield—Colonel Galatin—Mr. Cudworth—Mr. Robert Robinson—Letters to Mr. Whitefield—Remarks on Mr. Robinson's character—Eccentricity—Mr. Madan—Letter to him from Mr. Whitefield.

It has been observed, that when the friends of religion endeavour to reduce the annals of particular churches, with which they respectively stand connected, into distinct histories, they render a service which, when performed with diligence, and a rigid regard to historical verity, the religious public will not fail duly to appreciate.

In some cases success has crowned the diligent labours of the inquiring, while in numberless instances every attempt to rescue from the ravages of time some account of the origin and progress of religious societies, has proved fruitless. Disappointment is too often the reward of particular research.

The history of the Tabernacle at Norwich, like that of many other places in connexion with Lady Huntingdon, is involved in much obscurity. The first race of ministers were so actively and wholly employed in the grand object of their ministry, that they forgot to collect and preserve for the use of their successors,

a variety of important facts relative to the origin and early history of their respective churches. The fragments, collected by much patient investigation, are here thrown together, and rescued from oblivion.

The Rev. James Wheatley was admitted as a preacher by Mr. Wesley during the early struggle of Methodism, in 1742. He was esteemed a very popular preacher, and, in the prosecution of his labours, was called to endure many hardships and grievous sufferings for the sake of Christ. For many years he was a "burning and shining light"—but, alas! whilst stationed in Wiltshire, he was led away by the error of the wicked, and fell from his steadfastness. After a very minute investigation of the circumstances of his case, Mr. Wesley and his brother expelled him from the Connexion by the following note, dated June 25, 1751, which they afterwards found necessary to make public:—

"Because you have wrought folly in Israel, grieved the Holy Spirit of God, betrayed your own soul into temptation and sin, and the souls of many others, whom you ought, at the peril of your own life, to have guarded against *all* sin; because you have given the enemies of God, whenever they shall know these things, cause to blaspheme the ways and truth of God; we can, therefore, in nowise receive you as a fellow-labourer, till we see clear proofs of your zeal and deep repentance: of this, you have given us no proof yet. You have not so much as named one single person, in all England or Ireland, with whom you behaved ill, except those we knew before.

"The least and lowest proof of such repentance which we can receive is this—That till our next Conference (which we hope will be in October), you abstain both from preaching and practising physic. If you do not, we are clear; we cannot answer for the consequence.

"JOHN WESLEY.

"CHARLES WESLEY."

This occurred in Bristol in 1751, after which Mr. Wheatley went to reside in the county of Norfolk. After a time, having evinced deep repentance for the errors he had been led into, he felt a strong desire to visit Norwich. He was unknown in the city. When he reached its gates, he gave the bridle to his horse, and was taken to one of the public inns, before the door of which he observed a soldier on guard, and discovering something serious in his appearance, inquired if he knew any religious people in the city. He was answered in the affirmative; and as soon as the soldier was relieved from duty, was taken to one of their houses. These people were designated by the ancient title of Puritans, and in them Mr. Wheatley discovered the character of Christ's disciples. Under the patronage of this despised company he commenced his labours. His first sermon was

preached under the trees on Tomb-land, and his second was delivered at the Felon's-gate, on the Castle-hill. This new and strange scene began to attract attention and excite persecution, which afterwards raged in the most brutal manner, under the auspices of men of influence, and was even countenanced by the magistrates and clergy. This is attested from a printed pamphlet, entitled, "A true and particular narrative of the disturbances and outrages that have been committed in the city of Norwich since November to the present time;" a scarce and interesting narrative. We learn that—

"Towards the latter end of the year 1751, a most remarkable reformation attended the preaching of the Rev. Mr. Wheatley, inasmuch that amongst the people notorious for all kinds of vice and immorality, profaneness, and irreligion, many thousands seriously attended the word of God; and near *two thousand two hundred* of them gave in their names to each other, to unite together in earnestly seeking the salvation of their souls. This, waiving all party disputes, was the whole of their intention, and sole tendency of their doctrine and practice, and within a few weeks the face of things not only seemed, but was entirely changed, and a spirit of seriousness was visible throughout the city, even in those that were before the most abandoned; so that, as the public newspapers intimated, and as some of the magistrates said, whereas before they could hear nothing in the streets but profane swearing, they now seldom heard an oath; many an idle man became diligent, and many a dishonest man became faithful."

Mr. Wheatley finding it impossible to preach in the open air, a temporary building was erected on St. John's, Timber-hill, and, in imitation of the one erected by Mr. Whitefield in Moor-fields, London, was called the Tabernacle. In this place persecution raged with greater violence. The windows were broken, and the diabolical plan of sawing away the supporters of the building was formed, but happily detected and prevented, but the chapel was completely unroofed—the rage of the enemy was not spent on the Tabernacle. Mr. Wheatley shared in their fury. They drew him from the chapel, stripped him, dragged him to one of the bridges, intending to drown him, when he was mercifully rescued by the mayor. His life was frequently in danger from the fury of the mobs; and he was often dragged by the hair of his head through the streets of the city! All these grievous sufferings he, however, endured with the meekness of a lamb and the fortitude and patience of an apostle.

The riots at Norwich are thus noticed in the "Gentleman's Magazine" of the period:—

"Norwich, February 19, 1752.

"This city has for several months been disturbed and alarmed by the violent proceedings of an enraged or animated populace. They

had taken offence at some encouragement given by the magistrates to Mr. Wheatley, a Welsh cobbler, lately turned Methodist preacher, who comes in great compassion to convert them to a sense of religion; but they constantly disturb him with the beat of drums, &c. January 12th, though he had three constables to guard him, they beat both him and them, and so covered them with mud and dirt, that they could hardly be known. In this condition Mr. Wheatley went to the hall to the magistrates, as they were assembled. They sent one to gaol, and desired Mr. Wheatley not to preach that afternoon, which he readily complied with; nevertheless, the mob went to the Tabernacle, broke the pulpit and windows, pulled down the seats, and untiled and destroyed a great part of the building. Since this there has been great rioting from time to time, and on Sunday 16th, the mob broke open Mr. Lawson's door, the Baptist preacher's, when one got up in a chair and made a mock preaching, and then broke his windows—and not only disturbed the Baptist meeting, but very much abused the people that came from the Independent meeting. The mayor and sword-bearer came and read the proclamation, but they cried out, *Church and King! down with the meetings!* The mob increased to many thousands; and if any one were committed to prison, he soon got bail, and rioted more than ever; they threatened to take off the prison doors (as in the riot about exporting corn) if any of their fellows were imprisoned."

This account was followed by a letter addressed to the editor of the "Gentleman's Magazine," dated Norwich, March 22, 1752:

"As I find, when I left London, that very few had any tolerable idea of the enormous riots in this city on account of the Methodist preacher, I have made it a part of my business to inquire some further particulars, which take in an unconnected manner, for out of so many stories from persons inclined to one or other side, a regular account is as much beyond my skill as it would be to put an end to the confusion. It is said that the preacher, who ought to have been content to promulgate his doctrine on Sundays, called the people forth several times in a day, and occasioned great numbers, men and women, who were going to work, to neglect their occupations; that many journeymen who had worked hard till noon, going home, found their wives gone out to be *dear hearers*, and their children neglected, and no dinner prepared for them; that by such avocations many mouths had come upon the parishes; and the magistrates had been obliged to put into the workhouses many who were negligent of their families, to make them earn something towards their sustenance. Some of these were *sainted*, and had presents from their friends. On the other hand, the rioters who are committed to gaol, receive contributions from some of their party. The provocation to this riot and animosity to the good man of God, as he pretends to be, is that he occasions the labouring people to go without their dinners; the parishes to be loaded with helpless infants; and, in the meantime, though he came here without a groat, he pockets ten or twelve guineas every week, besides partaking of the feasts which are daily made for him by the devout and open-

hearted *dear hearers*, who club their husbands' earnings to treat him, his clerk, and one of his protectors, who, at the same time, is worth his thousands, but a miser and starver of his own family. But wives and children, masters and servants, are of little account in respect of the *dear hearer* and *holy inspired preacher*; insomuch that people of good sense, and once in high esteem, having declared that they did not know evil from good, before taught by their inspired Mr. Wheatley, are treated rudely enough by the populace, who call '*Bah! Bah!*' when they appear, alluding to the lost sheep recovered, as they term themselves.

"The populace have done great damage to the houses of several who harboured the preacher; and, on the election of a coroner, trundled some *dear hearers* down the Castle Hill, and afterwards pumped on one, and several have been much wounded by them. No less than sixteen of the ringleaders have been committed to prison; but this has by no means quieted the minds of the rest, who, as a further aggravation, complain that this holy man takes two or three pence a week of the meanest hearers, and they must not fail in payment on pain of damnation: that he has himself been a noted bad liver, and that he always wears a glove on one hand. However, he goes well dressed, in a grey coat and black under-habit, like a clergyman. I remember the town of Reading was in the same confusion on a like occasion, but here the soldiers have been called in, though to no effect, when they are but in small numbers."*

It is unnecessary to make any comment on these absurd and contradictory statements. They are inserted merely to mark the spirit and temper of those times. In the midst of such unparalleled sufferings, Mr. Wheatley stood

"——— As an iron pillar, strong,
And stedfast as a wall of brass."

His preaching was attended with Divine power; and many of the most profligate and abandoned characters in the city became reformed. He was instrumental in gathering a considerable society, the members of which he called *his Lambs*; on which account this appellation was generally applied to pious persons, and became a proverb throughout all that county. It is said, to the disgrace of the city, if true, that the enemies of religion, in order to ridicule Mr. Wheatley and *his Lambs*, carried a young lamb, elevated on a pole, before an unruly mob, through the principal streets of the city, and blasphemously cried aloud,

* See "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1752. The writer of the above adds—"That the high winds had blown down the steeple of one of the churches, and broke so many windows that the *carpenters* were employed to put up boards, as a *glazier* could not be had to furnish glass—being so much occupied in attending Mr. Wheatley's preaching!" *Carpenters*, it would seem, were irreligious men in Norwich—they cared for none of these things!

"*Behold the Lamb of God!*" Such a daring insult (let Mr. Wheatley and his followers be what they might) offered to the religion of the Son of God, is hardly to be met with in the annals of a Christian country.*

The success which attended Mr. Wheatley's labours, and the manner in which he endured persecution, turned the tide in his favour. From being universally despised, he became extremely popular; and the bulk of the inhabitants of the city began to conclude he certainly was a good man; and they, in some degree, espoused his cause. His popularity was so great that he erected one of the largest chapels in the city, which he called the Tabernacle. It was soon after the demolition of the temporary place of worship that the ground was purchased on which the present Tabernacle stands. It was bought for 230*l.*, and the building of the chapel cost 1,530*l.* On the 23d of April, 1752, forty-four persons bound themselves to pay 5*l.* each man, towards building the new Tabernacle.

While this place was erecting, Mr. Whitefield visited Norwich. When the time of the year came that he could sing, "Lo, the winter is past," he quitted winter quarters. "The time of the singing of birds and the voice of the turtle in the land," called *forth* his voice too. This was in April, 1753.

"For these three days past," says he, "I have been preaching here twice a-day. In the mornings we have been quiet; but in the evenings the sons of Belial have been somewhat rude. The place built here for public worship is much larger than yours at Newcastle; and I believe hundreds of truly awakened souls attend. What cannot God do? What will the end of this be? The destruction of Jericho. The rams'-horns must go round, till her towering walls fall down."

In a subsequent letter to Mr. Keene, he adds:—

"How does God delight to exceed even the hopes, and to disappoint the fears of his weak, though honest-hearted people! In spite of all opposition, he hath caused us to triumph even in Norwich. Thousands attend twice every day, and hear with the greatest eagerness. I hope it will appear yet more and more that God hath much people here."

Much exhausted by frequent preaching and startling attacks of sickness, Mr. Whitefield returned to London, and soon after wrote to one of his converts at Norwich—

"I shall little regard the weakness and indisposition of my body, if I can but have the pleasure of hearing, if not before, yet at the great

* See "Atmore's Methodist Memorial," p. 490.

day, that good was done to one precious soul at Norwich. Blessed be God for the seed sown there ! I doubt not but it will be watered with the dew of his heavenly blessing, and bring forth a divine increase."

The doctrines of the Cross did triumph there—but this apostolic man knew it not on earth. The late Mr. Fuller, of Kettering, was wont to tell the following anecdote, which he had from the lips of the person :—A young man, a native of Norwich, of about eighteen years of age, was walking one morning with a party of other young men, who had all agreed for that day to make a holiday. The first object that attracted their attention was an old woman, who pretended to tell fortunes. They immediately employed her to tell theirs ; and that they might fully qualify her for the undertaking, first made her thoroughly intoxicated with spirituous liquor. The young man of whom mention was first made, was informed among other things, that he should live to a very old age, and see his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, growing up around him. Though he had assisted in gratifying the old woman for the fraud by intoxicating her, yet he had credulity enough to be struck with those parts of her predictions which related to himself.

"And so (quoth he, when alone,) I am to see children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren ! At that age I must be a burden to the young people. What shall I do ? There is no way for an old man to render himself more agreeable to youth than by sitting and telling them pleasant and profitable stories. I will then (thought he) during my youth, endeavour to store my mind with all kinds of knowledge. I will see and hear, and note down everything that is rare and wonderful, that I may sit, when incapable of other employment, and entertain my descendants. Thus shall my company be rendered pleasant, and I shall be respected rather than neglected in old age. Let me see, what can I acquire first ? O ! here is the famous Methodist preacher, Whitefield ; he is to preach, they say, to-night—I will go and hear him. From these strange motives the young man declared he went to hear Mr. Whitefield. He preached that evening from Matthew iii. 7—'But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come ?' Mr. Whitefield, (said the young man,) described the Sadducee's character ; this did not touch me, I thought myself as good a Christian as any man in England. From this he went to that of the Pharisees. He described their exterior decency, but observed that the poison of the viper rankled in their hearts. This rather shook me. At length, in the course of his sermon, he abruptly broke off, paused for a few moments, then burst into a flood of tears, lifted up his hands and eyes, and exclaimed, 'O my hearers, the wrath to come ! *the wrath to come !*—

the wrath to come! These words sunk into my heart like lead in the waters. I wept: and when the sermon was ended, retired alone. For days and weeks I could think of little else. These awful words followed me wherever I went—*'The wrath to come!—the wrath to come!'* The issue was that the young man soon after made a public profession of religion, and in a little time became a preacher. He himself related the foregoing circumstance to Mr. Fuller."

The cause at Norwich now attracted the notice of Lady Huntingdon, and her liberal hand contributed to the erection of a Tabernacle.

"I rejoice to find (says her Ladyship) that the Gospel still triumphs at Norwich. If the Lord Jesus Christ be preached faithfully to the people, and exhibited in his mediatorial characters, offices, and relations, we may confidently anticipate great results. He must be the beginning, the middle, and the end of every sermon.

'To man the bleeding cross has promised all,
The bleeding cross has sworn eternal grace.'

Mr. Wesley gives me much information of a pleasing and painful nature. Of Mr. Wheatley I am unable to form an opinion, there is so much said for and against him. I trust all will be overruled for good, and that the word of our God may have free course, and be glorified in the conversion of sinners."

Up to this period, Mr. Wheatley had continued to labour with distinguished success; but he imprudently blended the practice of medicine with the preaching of the Gospel. This last step led to the most distressing circumstances, which eventually terminated his ministry in Norwich. Just at this period, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley, with Mr. John Wesley, who was indisposed, and Mr. Charles Perronet, son of the Rev. Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, arrived in that city. The whole town was in an uproar about Mr. Wheatley, "whose works of darkness," says Mr. Wesley, "are now brought to light; whereby the people are so scandalized and exasperated that they are ready to rise and tear him in pieces. We do not, therefore, wonder that the clergy are not forward to shew their friendly inclination to us; yet one has sent us a civil message, excusing his not visiting us till the tumult is over." A letter from Mr. Charles Perronet to Mr. Wheatley was printed and circulated, contrary to the express orders of the Messrs. Wesley, who observed—"it was not fit that their hands should be upon him."

On the Sunday after their arrival, Mr. Charles Wesley took the field, and preached to about two thousand, on Hog Hill, his brother standing by him. In the afternoon he went again to the same spot, where it was computed that ten thousand persons were assembled.

"Again (says Mr. Charles Wesley) I preached repentance towards

God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. They listened with great seriousness—their hearts were plainly touched, as some showed by their tears. Who could have thought the people of Norwich would ever more have borne a field preacher! It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. To him be all the glory who saith, 'I will work, and who shall hinder?'

Mr. John Wesley left Norwich, being too ill to preach, and Mr. Charles Wesley continued his labours. "At night (he says) I had multitudes of the great, vulgar, and the small, to hear me, with three justices and nine clergymen." The following Sunday he preached to such a multitude as he had not seen before in Norwich.

"During the hymn (says he) a pale, trembling opposer laboured to interrupt the work of God, and draw off the people's attention; but as soon as I began to read the history of the prodigal son, his commission ended, and he left me to a quiet audience. Now the door was opened indeed. For an hour and a half I showed their sins and wanderings from God, and invited them back to their Father's house. And surely he had compassion on them, inclining many hearts to return. God, I plainly found, had delivered them into my hand. He filled my mouth with persuasive words, and my heart with strong desires for their salvation. I concluded and began again, testifying my good will towards them, which was the sole end of my coming. But if I henceforth see them no more, yet is my labour with my God. They have heard words whereby they may be saved, and many of them, I cannot doubt, will be our crown of rejoicing in the great day."

With the view of forming a society in Norwich, Mr. Charles Wesley rented a large brewhouse from a justice of the peace, who had reserved it for them. This was soon fitted up as a chapel, and Mr. Wesley preached frequently to crowded congregations. Many having desired to be admitted into the society, Mr. Wesley met them at five o'clock in the morning. "We spent some time together (says he) in conference, praise, and prayer. I am in no haste for a society; first, let us see how the candidates live." Had this cautious and prudent conduct been observed through every part of the Methodist discipline, the preachers and members of the societies would not, indeed, have been so numerous as at present; but they would have had a degree of excellence they have not yet attained.

Hitherto all was tolerably tranquil; but opposition now began to manifest itself against Mr. Charles Wesley, and the doctrines he preached.

"The more Satan rages, the more our Lord will own and bless us. A poor rebel, at the conclusion, lifted up his voice, for whom I first prayed, and then turning full upon him, preached repentance and Christ

to his heart. I desired him to turn his face towards me, but he could not ; however, he felt the invisible chain which held him, to hear the offers of grace and salvation. I have great hope that Satan has lost his slave : some assured me they saw him depart in tears. At night I laid the axe to the root, and showed their actual and original corruption from Rev. iii. 17, ‘Thou sayest I am rich ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked ?’ The strong man was disturbed in his palace, and roared on every side. My strength increased with the opposition. A gentleman on horseback, with others, was ready to gnash upon me with his teeth ; but my voice prevailed, and they retreated to their stronghold, the alehouse. There with difficulty they procured some butchers to appear in their quarrel ; but they had no commission to approach till I had done. Then, in the last hymn, they made up to the table with great fury. The foremost often lifted up his stick to strike me, being within his reach, but he was not permitted. I staid to pray for them, and walked quietly to my lodgings. Poor Rabshakeh muttered something about the Bishop of Exeter.”

During the first year of their marriage, Mrs. Charles Wesley accompanied her husband in his travels in the North, where their accommodations usually formed a striking contrast to the luxuries in which she had been bred. She would sometimes speak of them with a smile, always dwelling on the tender attentions of her husband on these occasions, who, she said, “felt more for her than she did for herself.” When Mr. Charles Wesley had concluded his discourse, as stated above, a mob collected in great numbers, and seemed disposed to behave in an unruly manner. Mrs. Wesley became alarmed, and it was deemed advisable that she should pass through the crowd with Mrs. Colonel Galatin, who came with her, the Colonel being then quartered at Norwich, rather than with Mr. Wesley, who was the object of their vengeance, and who remained to brave it. Mrs. Wesley was low in stature—“happily (she said) her insignificance secured her. But her poor friend, Colonel Galatin’s lady, being of majestic height and appearance, was taken for the wife of Mr. Wesley, and being separated from her side, was sorely annoyed by the rabble. But all providentially arrived at their lodgings unhurt.

In August 1755, Mr. Whitefield visited Norwich, to open the new Tabernacle, at the request of Lady Huntingdon, who took great interest in all that concerned the cause of God in that city, and there he so turned the tide out of the Wesleyan channels, that he deemed it necessary to apprise his friend Mr. Wesley of the fact, and to assure him that there were no party designs on foot. When writing to a friend, he says—

“At this last place, notwithstanding offences have come, here has

been a glorious work begun, and is now carrying on. The polite and great seem to hear with much attention, and I scarce ever preached a week together with greater freedom."

His measures at Norwich seem to have been misrepresented to Mr. Wesley, who remonstrated with him for having obtruded on the scene of his labours. Mr. Whitefield had no intention of visiting Norwich at that time, but was desirous of paying his respects to Lady Huntingdon, at Donnington Park, had not illness and private business prevented him. Her Ladyship's request to preach at the opening of the Tabernacle he could not refuse, and was obliged to leave London with speed, as the day of dedication had been fixed. He therefore replied to Mr. Wesley, and deferred any further explanation till they should meet face to face. His letter is dated "Norwich, August 9, 1755."

"Rev. and dear Sir,—Till Thursday evening, I knew no more of coming to Norwich than the child unborn. Had I been well enough, and my private business permitted, I should have been some miles on my way towards Donnington Park. This I told Mr. Hartley, and acquainted him with every step; he should have written himself, and not retailed our conversation. As I expect to be in town some time next week, I choose to defer writing more till we have a personal interview. My time is too precious to be employed in hearkening to, or vindicating myself against, the false and invidious insinuations of narrow and low-life informers. Never was I more satisfied of my call to any place, than of my present call to Norwich. The Redeemer knows the way that I take. I came hither purely for his glory, without the least design to make a party for myself, or to please or displease any other party whatsoever. In this way, and in this spirit, through his divine assistance, I hope to go on. Blessed be his name, I trust my feeble labours have not been in vain. Sin, I hope, hath been prevented, errors detected, sinners convicted, saints edified, and my own soul sweetly refreshed. But I must add no more. That Jesus may give us all a right judgment in all things, and keep all parties from giving a wrong touch to the ark, is and shall be the constant prayer of, reverend and dear Sir, yours most affectionately in our common Lord,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."

It was at the request of Colonel and Mrs. Galatin, who had been some time at Norwich, and had formed an intimacy with many of the religious people there, that Lady Huntingdon had sent Mr. Whitefield to preach at the dedication of the Tabernacle. From some letters of this worthy couple, it appears that multitudes of all ranks attended his ministry, and lasting impressions were made on the minds of a vast number of people. On leaving Norwich the pulpit was supplied by the Rev. William Cudworth, who had commenced preacher in Mr. Whitefield's

Connexion, in which he continued for a considerable time, and was the intimate friend of Mr. Cennick, one of Mr. Whitefield's most successful fellow-labourers.

It was during this interval that Mr. Cudworth first became acquainted with the Rev. James Hervey. After the first edition of "Theron and Aspasio" came out, Mr. Cudworth found Mr. Hervey was so much of one mind with him, as that he had displayed the argument and two illustrations of his book concerning marks and evidences. This encouraged Mr. Cudworth to send him a present of "Marshall on Sanctification," which he had abridged about two years before. Immediately on this Mr. Hervey wrote to Mr. Cudworth, informing him of the opposition he met with, and requesting him to review and amend his works, particularly Dialogue 16. After this, by frequent interviews with Mr. Cudworth at Weston, and correspondence by letter, Mr. Hervey's views of Gospel truth were much enlarged and improved.*

Mr. Cudworth continued to exercise his ministry at the Tabernacle for some years, and was instrumental in the conversion of many who were added to the society. In the course of a little time he was joined by the Rev. Robert Robinson, who in after years became a person of some celebrity. This gentleman was a native of Swaffham, in the county of Norfolk, and at the early age of seventeen became a student at the Tabernacle, London.

The Tabernacle continued to be supplied by Mr. Wheatley, Mr. Cudworth, and Mr. Robinson for some time. Preaching stations were also established in the villages in the neighbourhood, and a tabernacle erected at Fornet, about twelve miles from Norwich. Mr. Robinson's talents as a public teacher, were of the highest order. He knew how to draw every ear to attention, and his dominion over his audience was absolute. After he had preached at the Tabernacle for some time, he quitted the Calvinistic Methodists, and formed an Independent

* Like Mr. Hervey, Mr. Cudworth gained his evangelical knowledge, not by education, but by reading. From his writings he appears to have been an accurate thinker, and well informed in the doctrines of grace, particularly in the nature and warrant of saving faith. After his acquaintance with Mr. Hervey he was eminently useful in reviewing and correcting that good man's writings, particularly "Theron and Aspasio," and "Aspasio Vindicated." He wrote one of the best vindications of the doctrines of grace, in opposition to "Sandeman's Letters," and "Bellamy's Dialogues." He published a sermon on Mr. Hervey's death, and three volumes of Tracts on religious subjects. He intended to have published what he called the *Evangelical Library*, containing an abridgment of the best divines, from the Reformation to his own time, in six volumes, 12mo.; but he did not live to complete the work. He became minister of an Independent congregation, Margaret-street, Oxford-road, London, and died in 1763, in the comforts of the doctrines of grace, leaving behind him a character for eminent holiness and integrity.

church of thirteen persons, who had imbibed his sentiments. Of the church he became the pastor, baptising infants, and performing all the other offices of an Independent minister. This was the *first* division which took place in the Tabernacle Society.

In a short time Mr. Robinson changed again, and became a Baptist. All these changes took place in the course of a few years; for, in 1759, when he was only twenty-four years of age, he was invited to the pastoral charge of the Baptist church at Cambridge. On leaving Norwich, the congregation he had formed became extinct, most of the members having returned to the Tabernacle. The rapidity of the changes in shifting from one denomination to another in his youth, was unhappily followed by a versatility in maturer years, which betrayed itself in regard to subjects of unspeakably greater importance. His unbounded self-conceit, and more than sovereign contempt of others, exposed a heart already removed from under the influence of evangelical truth, and fully prepared to drink the cup of Socinianism to the dregs. The close of his ministerial course is a tale of horror. Labouring under a constant dejection and languor of mind, he removed to Birmingham, conceiving that an interview with Dr. Priestley, which he had long desired, would prove beneficial to him. He preached twice for the Doctor, who was charmed with his conversation, but much disappointed in his preaching. "His discourse (he said) was unconnected and desultory, and his manner of treating the doctrine of the Trinity savoured more of burlesque than serious reasoning." The impression left on Dr. Priestley's mind by his conversation and preaching was, that "he (Mr. Robinson) was of the Unitarian faith, and had received considerable light from his theological writings." There is a thrilling horror in recording the event—the day after he had been permitted to utter such awful sentiments, he was found dead in his bed!

The indulgence of eccentricity, and a fondness for novelty were strong features in his character. For some time, in order to follow nature, he would only eat when he was hungry, and go to bed when he was overpowered with sleep, so that day was turned into night, and night into day. How absurd and inconvenient these fancies must have been in the head of a large family, may be easily conceived. Eccentricity, it has been often said, is one of the attributes of genius; but nothing can be farther from the truth—it is the pretext of men who could lay claim to genius on no other account. True genius will prove the corrector of eccentricity. Whoever heard of the eccentricities of Grotius, of Sir Isaac Newton, of Locke, or Baxter, or of a host of others? If there was any difference between them

and other men, their genius dictated a greater propriety of conduct. That some men of genius have been eccentric is acknowledged; but men still more eccentric can be produced in unspeakably greater proportion, from whose souls one spark of genius never appeared. The eccentricity of some men of genius is to be considered as a painful proof that their genius was not complete, that there was a weak part in the soul to which it did not extend, and which was the cause of the eccentricity. If this will not satisfy, then it may be asserted, that some men to whom genius has been given, not having it under the guidance of wisdom, become odd and eccentric, and sink beneath the dignity of that rank in the intellectual and moral world in which they were entitled to stand.

Some time in the year 1757, the Rev. Martin Madan, elder brother of the Bishop of Peterborough, then occasionally at Thetford, visited Norwich, at the request of Lady Huntingdon, and preached in several of the churches. Great crowds attended his ministry, and the great Head of the Church was pleased to make bare his arm. Some persons from Lakenheath having been at Norwich during Mr. Madan's visit to that city, became acquainted with the glad tidings that there is a Saviour, and in their return home manifested an anxious wish that their friends and neighbours should hear what proved to them so great a blessing. Accordingly a considerable number of persons invited Mr. Madan to Lakenheath. This invitation he eagerly embraced, and being invited by the rector, preached in the church with great acceptance and success. Mr. Wesley also preached there several times about the same period. He likewise mentioned Mr. Madan to the people, and afterwards sent them a curate by the desire of the rector. "So now (says Mr. Wesley) they have one that both preaches and loves the gospel."

CHAPTER XLVI.

Mr. Wesley takes a lease of the Tabernacle at Norwich—Dissatisfied with the Tabernacle Society—Tabernacle sold to Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Shirley, Mr. Glascott, and Mr. Bowman—Lady Huntingdon, Lady Anne Erskine, and Mr. Toplady, visit Norwich—Remarkable Sermon by Mr. Toplady—Mr. Mark Wilks—His appointment to the Tabernacle—Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher visit Norwich—Yarmouth—Mr. Shirley—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Mr. Crole and Mr. Clayton sent to Norwich—Conversion of Mr. Johnson—Letters from Lady Huntingdon to the Committee of the Tabernacle.

ON the termination of Mr. Wheatley's ministry at Norwich, the Tabernacle was variously supplied, but chiefly by those in con-

nexion with Mr. Whitefield, till the year 1758, when Mr. Wheatley made an offer of it to Mr. Wesley.

“James Wheatley (says he) repeated his offer of the Tabernacle. But I was in no haste. I wanted to consult my friends, and consider the thing thoroughly. One glaring objection to it was, ‘The congregation there *will* not hear me.’ He replied, ‘Sir, you cannot tell that unless you will make trial.’”

Mr. Wesley consented, but many declared he should not enter the pulpit, and put themselves in the way to prevent it. He did, however, preach five or six times, and overcame all opposition. On his return to Norwich in March 1759, he found the society, once consisting of many hundred members, mouldered into nothing. Out of fifteen or sixteen hundred subscribers, not one was left. He now set himself vigorously to work, and appointed those who were willing to join in the society to meet him the following evening. About twenty gave in their names. “But the greater part (says Mr. Wesley) appeared like frightened sheep. On Saturday and Sunday about forty more gave in their names. Thirty or forty more spoke to me on Monday. I think two-thirds of those I have yet seen have had a clear sense of God’s pardoning love.” On the following Lord’s-day Mr. Wesley administered the Lord’s Supper in the Tabernacle to near two hundred communicants. “So solemn a season I never remember to have known in the city of Norwich. As a considerable part of them were Dissenters, I desired every one to use what posture he judged best. Had I required them to kneel, probably half would have sat. Now, all but one kneeled down.”

Mr. Wesley continued nearly the whole of the month of March at Norwich, and divided his time in preaching at the Foundery, and the Tabernacle. He also preached occasionally at Forncet, near Norwich, where a tabernacle had been erected by Mr. Wheatley, and included in the lease to Mr. Wesley. On one occasion, when he went to the latter place he found Mr. Cudworth had preached there in the morning—

“So that the people looked as direful upon me (says he) as if it had been Satan in person. However, they flocked from all parts, so that the Tabernacle would not near contain them. After preaching, I found Mr. Cudworth sitting in the pulpit behind me, whom I quietly and silently passed by. About six, I preached at the Tabernacle in Norwich, crowded with attentive hearers. Perhaps these two will be brought into order by and by. Hitherto there has been no King in Israel.”

A day or two after this Mr. Wesley had an interview with Mr. Cudworth, which seems to have produced little effect on either—

“ His opinions (says Mr. Wesley) are all his own, quite new ; and his phrases as new as his opinions. All these opinions, yea, and phrases too, he affirms to be necessary for salvation ; maintaining that all who do not receive them, worship another God ; and he is as incapable as a brute beast of being convinced, even in the smallest point.”

The society now consisted of upwards of four hundred members, two hundred of which Mr. Wesley thought it improbable would continue with him long. Several new regulations were introduced—every member of the society was required to produce his ticket when he came in—the men and women were ordered to sit apart—and spectators were excluded from the galleries while the Lord’s Supper was administering, which had been customary from the time the Tabernacle was built. This Mr. Wesley judged highly improper, and therefore ordered none to be admitted but those who desired to communicate. These things produced discontent, and the preaching of Mr. Cudworth, who was frequently admitted to the pulpit during Mr. Wesley’s absence, tended to widen the breach, insomuch that on Mr. Wesley revisiting Norwich a few months after, he remarked :—

“ I preached at the Tabernacle to a large, rude, noisy congregation. I took knowledge what manner of teachers they had been accustomed to, and determined to *mend* them or *end* them. I told the society in plain terms that they were the most ignorant, self-conceited, self-willed, fickle, untractable, disorderly, disjointed society, in the three kingdoms.”

On visiting Norwich in October 1763, Mr. Wesley enforced several new rules, particularly closing the Tabernacle, in order to prevent preaching in the time of church service :—

“ Notwithstanding the notice I had given over and over (says Mr. Wesley), abundance of people came to the Tabernacle at two in the afternoon, the usual time of preaching ; and many of these *lambs* roared like lions. For many years I have had more trouble with this society, than with half the societies in England put together. With God’s help, I will try you one year longer ; and I hope you will bring forth better fruit. Let me only get the *lambs* in order, and I will quickly tame the bears.”

In October following Mr. Wesley returned to Norwich, and inquired into the state of the society :—

“ I have seen (says he) no people in all England or Ireland so changeable as this. This society in 1755 consisted of eighty-three members : two years after, of one hundred and thirty-four : in 1758 it was shrunk to one hundred and ten. In March 1759 the society was increased to about seven hundred and sixty. But nearly five hundred of these had formerly been with James Wheatley, and having been scattered abroad, now ran together, they hardly knew why. Few of them were thoroughly awakened, most deeply ignorant, all

bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke, having never had any rule or order among them, but every man doing what was right in his own eyes. It was not, therefore, strange that the next year only five hundred and seven of these were left. In 1761 they were reduced to four hundred and twelve. I cannot tell how it was that in 1762 they were increased again to six hundred and thirty. But the moon soon changed, so that in 1763 they were shrunk to three hundred and ten. This large reduction was owing to the withdrawing the sacrament, to which they had been accustomed from the time the Tabernacle was built. They are now sunk to a hundred and seventy-four."

Thus ended Mr. Wesley's connexion with the Tabernacle at Norwich, and Mr. Wheatley left it to the Rev. John Hook,* who held it till it came into the hands of Lady Huntingdon, who in February 1775 advanced to Mr. John Hook the sum of £66 5s. 9d., for all his expenses and charges during his serving at the Tabernacle. In the same month Mr. Wheatley let the building to her Ladyship at an annual rent of £40. A copy of the agreement will be found below.†

Mr. Shirley, Mr. Glascott, and Mr. Bowman, were the first clergymen who preached in the Tabernacle after it came into possession of the Countess of Huntingdon.

The spring of the following year was remarkable for the arrival of Lady Huntingdon in Norwich, accompanied by Lady Anne Erskine and Mr. Toplady, whose memorable sermon from Acts xvii. 6, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also," left a lasting impression on the minds of many. Her Ladyship's stay in Norwich was not of a long duration: the congregation was regularly organized, and the affairs of the society arranged; and, a few months after her return to Trevecca, we find her communicating the intelligence to one of her favourite students, the late Rev. John Hawkesworth:—

"You will expect some particulars to gladden your heart, but I shall

* He was of a respectable family, and left a son who was a musical composer and performer. He married a lady of the name of Madden, an authoress, and left two sons, the Rev. Dr. Hook, Prebendary of Winchester, and Mr. Theodore Hook, a well-known writer of the present day.

† I hereby accept Lady Huntingdon as tenant to me for the Tabernacle, in the room of Mr. Hook, and upon the very same terms and conditions; and I hereby promise, upon a penalty of two hundred pounds, to give her Ladyship a lease of the Tabernacle upon the very same terms and conditions that I gave a lease of the same to Mr. Hook, and that the lease for the same shall be made and conveyed without delay.

"Witness,

"JAMES WHEATLEY.

"C. GLASCOTT, "THOMAS BOWMAN,

"DANIEL ARNES, "JOHN IVORY.

"JOHN FULLER,

Norwich, February 17, 1775."

This was Mr. Wheatley's last concern with the Tabernacle, for on the 27th of the following May he was removed into another world.

not know where now to begin or where to end. I have one congregation at Norwich, *four thousand* hearers, *six hundred* communicants, and this under two students, who write me word that about *thirty* were added to that society in three weeks. May our gracious Lord continue to bless you more and more, and cause you to rejoice in Him who lived and died, and now, O wonderful love! intercedes for sinners."

In August following, the Countess purchased Mr. Wheatley's share in the Tabernacle for nine hundred pounds, and vested it in seven trustees, four clerical and three lay, who were empowered, upon the decease of one trustee, to elect another; to form a committee for the management of the secular concerns of the chapel; and to appoint a minister, or to revoke his appointment at pleasure.

The Rev. Mark Wilks was appointed by her Ladyship. He, with his celebrated brother, the Rev. Matthew Wilks, was the convert of the Rev. William Piercy, and both brothers were her Ladyship's students at Trevecca. Matthew was very studious, but Mark was too impatient to endure the drudgery of acquiring languages. He longed to be useful: and the Countess acquiescing in his desires, appointed him to those places where she thought his services and his talents would be most acceptable.

To the time of his appointment to the Tabernacle at Norwich, he had been a mere itinerant amongst the rude villagers of Warwickshire, and the ignorant and superstitious inhabitants of Wales, but was now called to address auditories of a more refined and intellectual character.

It was in the pulpit which the apostolic Whitefield once occupied that Mr. Wilks was now stationed: and although of very little value as the test of character, yet the simplicity of his appearance, and the thoughtless negligence of his exterior, could scarcely be surpassed by the apostle of Calvinistic Methodism himself. His long hair fell carelessly upon his shoulders: his slender person and ruddy countenance gave him an appearance of youth beyond what he possessed, and impressed upon him the character of a stripling. The whole of his demeanour was illuminated by the fire of affectionate zeal, and by an earnestness which gave proof that

"He was honest in the sacred cause."

In his prayer there was nothing to excite the peculiar attention, or to elevate the expectation of his audience; but his text, the striking and emphatic tone in which he repeated it, and the manner of introducing his sermon, effectually ensured him the undivided and untired attention of his hearers.

He read his text,—"*There is a lad here, with five barley*

loaves and two small fishes." A long pause ensued—then, in his own peculiar manner, he repeated—" *a lad here* : well, better is truth from the mouth of a lad, than error from that of a man." He again repeated—" *a lad here*—and this lad does not come empty handed : *five barley loaves and two fishes*—if it is coarse fare, at least it is wholesome." This is a slight specimen of the manner in which he introduced his subject and himself to the notice of his new congregation, and in which he seemed to assert, through the simile of the loaves and fishes, the quality of talent to which he made pretension. The object of his discourse, however, was not himself ; he exhibited the value of the Gospel in language and with a manner so impressive and solemn, as to rivet the attention of his hearers, and seemed to cast over every countenance a shade of deep reflection and of solemn feeling. His next subject was that of the wild gourds ; and the succeeding one from Nehemiah : " There is much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall." It must be acknowledged that the striking and uncommon character of the subjects which he selected, united to the useful and peculiar manner in which he treated them, contributed considerably to his popularity. Numbers flocked to hear him ; his own congregation increased rapidly ; and he became generally popular. He was indeed *popular*, in the true sense of the word ; not in the sense of accommodation to humours and prejudices of people, but calculated to strike and seize their hearts. He was particularly happy as a village preacher. In Yarmouth also he was very successful.

The regiment in which Mr. Howel Harris was an officer, was quartered at Yarmouth in the summer of 1760. He preached every night, none daring to oppose him ; and by that means a good seed was sown in that wicked town. Mr. Wesley was invited there in 1761, and in the course of a little time there were four hundred members in society. In a few years Mr. Benjamin Worship and Mr. John Simpson, who had preached to the people in the absence of other supplies, embraced Calvinistic principles, and with the greater proportion of the people, left Mr. Wesley's society.*

The labours of Mr. Glascott and Mr. Bowman were also abundantly successful at this time in exciting a spirit of inquiry. The commencement of the year 1777 Mr. Shirley visited Norwich, and his ministry attracted universal attention. Grandson of Robert, first Earl Ferrers, nephew of Washington and Henry,

* A chapel in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion was erected at Great Yarmouth some years after. It was very considerably enlarged, and re-opened in October 1818.

second and third earls, and brother of Laurence, Washington, and Robert, successively fourth, fifth, and sixth earls, his appearance in the pulpit of the Tabernacle created no small sensation, and was instrumental in drawing many of the higher orders to hear him. His pulpit labours were immense. By the force of a bold and imposing eloquence, he carried the hearts and consciences of his hearers along with him; and at the same time awed and impressed all by the ardour of his zeal, and the lively and important exhibitions of the gospel, which he presented with a fervour, perseverance, and disinterestedness, of which few preachers in the present day are possessed. Lady Huntingdon was always gratified with the labours of Mr. Shirley. This is evident in her correspondence. In April 1777, when writing to Mr. Hawkesworth, her Ladyship says:—

“ Mr. and Mrs. Shirley are well. He is serving my chapel in Norwich, and rejoicing exceedingly over a large congregation, which I went down to settle just *one* year ago; we have *eight hundred* of most precious souls in the society there; and Mr. Shirley adds, he believes there is nothing like it in the whole kingdom—their experience, lives, and conversation are so excellent. Glory! glory! be to our dear Immanuel, for the high favour shewn to his poor servants:—chiefly raised by the students and Mr. Glascott!”

In a subsequent letter some strong expressions of her approbation occur:—

“ Dear Mr. Shirley is so blessed and owned of God at the Norwich Tabernacle, that I am constantly blessing and praising the Lord for the display of his love and favour to our poor unworthy services for his glory, and the salvation of precious souls. His ministry is so faithful—such vivid applications to the conscience—so earnest—so affectionate—so zealous—that many are born again, and will be his joy and crown in the great day. All glory to our divine Head for the success which attends our labours in the Lord’s vineyard! Blessed are the feet that carry the glorious light of the gospel into the dark corners of our land, where the Sun of Righteousness never shone! And blessed are the lips that proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to the poor, the wretched, and the undone!—Success has crowned our efforts at that wicked place, Yarmouth. Dear Mr. Shirley was well received, and had a numerous congregation. There have been many divisions amongst them—but I hope good has been done, and some souls brought from darkness to light.”

To Mr. Shirley succeeded Mr. Crole and Mr. Clayton, two of the senior students at Trevecca—men destined by Divine Providence to fill distinguished situations in the Church of God, as pastors of flourishing Dissenting congregations in the metropolis.

“ I have never (says the noble patroness of Trevecca) sent a stu-

dent forth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, without special prayer and supplication to God, the Judge of all, and Sovereign Head of his Church, that he would be graciously pleased to bless the feeble instruments, and enable them to deliver, with fidelity and zeal, his proclamation of mercy to the guilty and rebellious children of men—to enrich their understandings—to cultivate their talents—to endue them with hearts of deeper sensibility for the ignorance and misery of their fellow-men—and crown their labours with a harvest of immortal souls redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. The Lord Jesus Christ, whose I trust they are, and to whom they dedicate themselves for this important work, has all power and authority in heaven, earth, and hell; and he hath declared that he will be with his servants always, even unto the end. Even now the Lord of Life and Glory speaks to every minister, every student—‘Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’”

With such prayers and benedictions these devoted young men left their beloved retreat, leaving all events to God—to his adorable and sovereign disposal, and bent their lonely way to the scene of their labours. A sense of the magnitude, high importance, and difficulty of the undertaking, has led many a man to say, from the bottom of his heart—“Who is sufficient for these things?” The immutable purpose of the love of Jehovah, founded not in human goodness, but in sovereign mercy, must be the minister’s strength. The triumphs of the day of Pentecost, of the three first ages of Christianity, and of the glorious Reformation, must dwell in his memory. Oh! for the descent of the Spirit of wisdom, power and love, from the glorious Head in heaven, for such high and gracious ends!

The labours of the students, with the benediction of the Most High, proved successful in its progress, and infinitely glorious in its issue. A short time previous to their arrival, and not long after Lady Huntingdon’s visit to Norwich, the Rev. John Johnson, afterwards minister of St. George’s, Manchester, had recovered from a long and dangerous illness. A friend invited him to go to her Ladyship’s chapel to hear one of the students, who had become exceedingly popular, and was attended by such multitudes that it awakened the envy and enmity of the clergy. Mr. Johnson went to the Tabernacle—the Rev. John Clayton, sen., now of London, was then the preacher. The subject of the discourse was *the two builders*, one of whom built his house upon a rock, the other upon the sand. Under this sermon it pleased God to convince him that he had hitherto been building his hopes of eternal life on a sandy foundation. Being naturally of a pharisaical turn of mind, it was some considerable time before he enjoyed the glorious liberty of the Gospel; but no sooner were its precious doctrines, together with the dependen-

cies and connexions of God's eternal, personal, and independent election—his everlasting and unalterable covenant—the substitution of Christ—free salvation through his precious blood—and the final perseverance of the saints—brought with influence and power to his soul, than he immediately felt it his paramount duty to recommend Christ and his complete salvation to his friends and relations, which he did with a humble dependence on the promising blessing of Him who hath said, “My word shall not return unto me void.”

After waiting about twelve months, the Lord was pleased to open a door for him, and Mr. Johnson's mind being at perfect liberty with respect to his call, he entered her Ladyship's College at Trevecca, April 28, 1780, having previously availed himself of the instructions of one of her Ladyship's ministers, relative to the important work in which he was about to engage.

Mr. Crole was a young man of considerable talents and information, and was honoured with the friendship of his noble patroness to the close of his earthly career. The unaffected simplicity, seriousness, and ability with which he delivered his sentiments on religious subjects: the humility and fervour with which he poured forth his soul in devotional exercises; the sanctity of his life, and the affectionate concern he always expressed for the souls of his fellow-men, not only excited the admiration, but gained him the esteem of her Ladyship:—

“Our success (writes the Countess) is great, exceeding great at Norwich. Crole, the last student sent there, is much liked, and his labours useful. I am satisfied he is such as the Head of the Church delights to honour. The glory of God, the salvation of sinners, and the extension of the Redeemer's empire, are the important objects which occupy his attention; in the accomplishment of which he is resolved, through grace, to persevere, whatever it may cost him, till summoned to his reward by the great Captain of our salvation. Oh for more such labourers! for the harvest is great, exceeding great, and I find so few willing to renounce ease, pleasure, ambition, and come to the help of the Lord.”

He was a native of Scotland, and had the inestimable privilege of a religious education. On his removal to London, at the age of twenty-two, he chiefly attended the ministry of Mr. Cruden, of Crown-court; but Mr. Madan was honoured as the instrument of bringing him to clearer views of the Gospel, as a system of free and sovereign grace. By means of Mr. Madan he was introduced to Lady Huntingdon; and on going to Trevecca, diligently and successfully applied himself to recover his knowledge of the Latin, and to gain an acquaintance with the Greek

and Hebrew languages. The excellent patroness of that institution knew how to appreciate his talents, but did not fully enter into his ideas respecting the necessity of improving them by an unremitted application to academical studies ; and she, therefore, urged him immediately to commence his ministerial course. For some time Mr. Crole itinerated ; and in this service his labours were abundant. His zeal, prudence, and fortitude were worthy of the best times of Christianity ; and though he laboured under many discouragements, and in some instances was cruelly maltreated ; yet, through good report and evil report, honoured and caressed by the friends, or despised and persecuted by the enemies of religion, he failed not to declare the whole counsel of God. Nor did he labour in vain, but was the instrument of great good to the souls of many ; and he had the consolation, at a late period of his life, to hear of some remarkable instances, in which his early labours had been followed with a blessing to those who were never personally known to him.

In the course of a few years, Mr. Wilks left the congregation to which he had been peculiarly acceptable, and withdrew from the Connexion of the Countess of Huntingdon. Nothing remains of the particulars of that event. Her Ladyship is said to have testified a deep regret at this separation ; and, at his departure, recommended him to several destitute congregations, none of which, however, were then suited to his wishes. He had previously become acquainted with the Rev. Rowland Hill, and, after quitting the Tabernacle at Norwich, he preached a considerable time in his Connexion in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. After he left Norwich, several of the Tabernacle society separated themselves from the Connexion of Lady Huntingdon, and having purchased the chapel built by the Rev. Thomas Bowman, invited Mr. Wilks to return and settle amongst them. He had no hesitation in accepting their invitation ; for not only had Norwich been endeared to him by the ties of friendship, but he regarded it as a scene where his life might be made subservient to those objects for the purposes of which he most valued it,—the glory of God, and the advantage of his fellow-creatures. He therefore returned to Norwich, and became pastor of his new meeting under the denomination of Calvinistic Methodist, without the customary form of ordination. The congregation soon after rejected infant baptism, and the society was formed into a regular Baptist church, which it has ever since remained. Many of those who had been his most active supporters, and his first and warmest admirers as a preacher, on this change left him. A few years before Mr.

Wilks's decease, a new place of worship was erected in another part of the city, in which the congregation now assemble, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Puntis. This made the second separation from the Tabernacle.

The Tabernacle still continued to be supplied by a succession of ministers, among whom we find the names of Peckwell, Wills, Taylor, Piercy, and Coughlan, clergymen of the Church of England; Williams, Jones, Owen, Langley, and Green. This latter gentleman, being invited by the congregation to remain among them, Lady Huntingdon complied with their request. He continued to labour with great success until some misunderstanding took place, when he left them, and retired to Reading, in Berkshire, where he died. After Mr. Green's removal, different ministers preached in Norwich, under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, particularly Messrs. Phillips, Young, Brother-ton, Grey, and Dr. Ford. In 1792 Mr. Phillips received an appointment to reside in Norwich, which he continued to do till 1816, when, on account of the renewal of the minister's appointment, a painful separation took place. This made the third division since the opening of the Tabernacle. In March 1819, this branch of the congregation erected a chapel, sixty-seven feet by fifty-two, in Princess-street, over which the Rev. John Alexander was ordained pastor.

When Mr. Phillips left the Tabernacle, it was again supplied by the ministers in the Countess's Connexion, viz., Messrs. John Meffin, Joshua Meffin, Sherman, John Owen, Noyes, Sheperd, Davies, John Mather and Stevenson. In 1819 the Rev. John Owen, who had been some time minister of her Ladyship's chapel at Cheltenham, received an invitation to labour in the Tabernacle. This was confirmed by the approbation of the London trustees. A few years since he removed to Bath, having been appointed minister of her Ladyship's chapel in that city, when the Rev. J. Dryden was appointed in his place.

This once flourishing congregation the *Trustees* have managed to break up. In 1834 it was deemed necessary to fill up the vacancies in the trust occasioned by death. Two clerical trustees, therefore, were appointed, and, at the same time, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the minister and the committee, a lay trustee, whom most of the congregation considered unfit for the office. Thus a feeling of opposition was produced, which was subsequently strengthened in the minds of the people who expressed a determination to defray none of the expenses that might be incurred by such an appointment. In this way matters went on until September 1835. Meanwhile two of the lay trustees, the

third having for some years ceased to act, frequently attempted to interfere in the business entrusted to the managing committee. It was therefore found necessary to convene a meeting of all the trustees, the minister, and the committee. Accordingly, a meeting took place on the 30th of September. The committee then submitted the following proposition to the trustees—viz., That they (the committee) would engage to pay the expenses, amounting to 27*l.*, incurred by making the new deed of conveyance, upon condition that the lay trustees abstain from interfering with the business of the committee; and that no lay trustee be made at any future time, without first consulting the congregation.

On the 4th of April, 1836, without any previous intimation, an attorney's letter was sent to the treasurer, ordering him to pay what money he had received, or might hereafter receive, on account of the chapel, into Messrs. Gurney's bank, and to open an account in the name of the trustees of the Tabernacle.

Many of the congregation resolved to leave a place which had been, and was likely to be, subject to similar annoyances—some had left already; and the minister, after representing the case to the trustees, and requesting, but in vain, that his last quarter's salary might be paid up, sent in his resignation, and prepared to leave Norwich. On the 25th of April, however, the seat-holders and members of the church passed resolutions, in virtue of which, on Sunday, May the 8th, 1836, the Rev. John Dryden and the great body of the congregation removed, and commenced public worship in St. Andrew's Chapel,* where they have since continued, with every prospect of increasing comfort and success. This is the *fourth*, and by far the most numerous, division in the Tabernacle Society since its commencement.

To the Society of Norwich Lady Huntingdon wrote as follows:—

“ My very dear Christian Friends,—Your earnest and faithful affection towards me bows my spirit before the Lord, knowing how unworthy I am of the least of his mercies. May his love a thousand fold into your own gracious souls be felt, as that reward I can with the most thankful heart ever think but sufficient to repay you all. My dear friends, let our love, faith, and diligence, be known to all the churches, as abounding from that grace that flows from the cross of Christ, crucified for us; and in this strength we shall be able to do all things that can bring praise to his precious name, and that peace, through the blood of his cross, to our poor sinful and unworthy souls. Take your many trials as that best road, which is even through great tribulation, as the sure fruits of true faith and much prayer. Let us

* It is a singular fact, that the individual who built St. Andrew's Chapel, gave it the name, on the day it was opened, of *The New Tabernacle*.

remember, in many of the roughest steps of our road, we have met the smile of that reserved Heaven as the heirs of his Cross first, and next the sure and purchased glory that awaits us in consequence of it. Have courage, my dear friends, we shall reap if we faint not. Hell is conquered—sin is pardoned—and eternal life our own, and this while only for a short time we meet with nothing but vanquished foes. My love and zeal for your prosperity in the Gospel ceases not—for this end our faithful friend, Mr. Langley, showed all readiness in your service, and offered himself while I was in the midst of much distress and many prayers. Yet here my care for you abates not. Our dear minister, Mr. Taylor, also I have considered for you, as one you may the more readily call upon, as more immediately in trust for you; as also our various and most eminent servants of the Churches with him, may, by their various visitations among you, cause you to feel the blessings intended by those different gifts bestowed for the edification and the building up of Christ's Church. And now, my dear friends, farewell. Forget not to pray for an old but tender mother over you all; but above all, for one of Jesus Christ's poor widows, who he often feeds in the day of famine; and thus, with a heart and spirit abounding with love to all, I remain the unworthy servant of the beloved Church of Norwich,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

“O! let love abound to the Committee—having found them faithful in little, and in very much to you all, and a comfort to my own soul.

“College, July 22, 1781.”

CHAPTER XLVII.

History of the Tabernacle at Bristol—Rev. Mr. Whitefield's family—First Methodist Society at Bristol—Success of his preaching—Opposition of the Clergy—Newgate—Mr. Dagge—Field-preaching—Kingswood—St. George's Church—Mr. Hart—Kingswood School—Mr. Wesley at Bristol—Mistake about Kingswood School—Founded by Mr. Whitefield—Mr. Maxfield—First Methodist Preaching House—Mr. Charles Wesley—Lady Huntingdon contributes to the School at Kingswood—Division between Mr. Whitefield and Wesley—Mr. Cennick—Imprisonment of Savage the Poet—Lady Macclesfield's cruelty—Letter to Lady Huntingdon from Lady Macclesfield—Persecution at Hampton—Preachers at the Tabernacle—Mr. Relly—Mr. Godwin.

BRISTOL has long been considered the cradle of METHODISM in England. At Bristol, the modern practice of field-preaching first began; there the first Methodist preaching-house was erected; and the foundations of Methodism, as a substantive

an organized sect, existing independently of the Church, were first laid at Bristol. These are remarkable events in the history of that city—one of the most ancient, most beautiful, and most interesting in England.

Bristol had many claims on the founder of Calvinistic Methodism. His father, Mr. Thomas Whitefield, nephew of the Rev. Samuel Whitefield, Rector of Rockhampton, in Gloucestershire, was brought up as a wine-merchant in Bristol, where he married a lady related to several respectable families of that city. Mr. Whitefield's sister was twice married at Bristol, and in her house one of the first societies met for prayer and other religious exercise. His brother, of whom frequent mention is made in the correspondence of Lady Huntingdon and others, by whom he was often hospitably entertained, was likewise a resident at Bristol.

When the first Methodist societies broke up at Oxford, Mr. Whitefield went to Gloucester for the benefit of his native air; for the mistaken austerities which he had practised, had so reduced him that he was scarcely able to walk. But it pleased the God of all grace to reveal to him the way of salvation by faith; so that, while his fellow-collegian, Mr. Wesley, was discovering that he had no religion, his younger companion was rejoicing in the power, and riches, and sovereignty of Divine grace. He now improved the peaceful and happy state of his mind by devoting himself to the study of the sacred Scriptures, in which, under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, he made eminent advancement. His heart, expanded by the joys of reconciliation to God, loved to tell of the divine goodness; for which purpose he formed a little society in his native place, and braved the reproach which he knew would be heaped upon him, for forming what were called Conventicles. He read to a few poor people several times a week, and visited and prayed with the prisoners in Gloucester gaol. From thence he went to visit some of his relations in Bristol, where his active and zealous spirit soon began to diffuse the savour of the Name that he loved. Societies were formed for conversation, prayer, expounding the Scriptures and mutual edification. In this labour of love he was ably assisted by his early and kind friend and patron, Gabriel Harris, Esq., one of the aldermen of Gloucester. Soon after his ordination he again visited Bristol, and his ministry was attended everywhere by vast crowds; while signal tokens of the Divine blessing and favour accompanied the proclamation of the doctrines of the Cross.

Letters from Mr. Ingham and the Messrs. Wesley made him long to follow them to Georgia; and their arrival in England

soon after to procure assistance, determined him to proceed to America. Having been accepted by General Oglethorpe and the Trustees, and presented to the Bishop of London and the Primate, and finding that it would be some months before the vessel in which he was to embark would be ready, he wrote to his relations at Gloucester, telling them his design, and saying that if they would promise not to dissuade him, he would visit them to take his leave; but otherwise he would embark without seeing them, for he knew his own weakness.

Having determined on his departure, he visited first his native place, and from thence made a tour to Bath and Bristol, attracting by his popular preaching immense numbers in every place, where many were roused to a serious solicitude for their eternal happiness. The Bishop of Gloucester approved his determination, received him like a father, not doubting that God would bless him, and that he would accomplish much good in Georgia. At Bristol, he was held in high honour; the mayor appointed him to preach before the corporation. People of all denominations flocked to hear him; the churches were as full on week days as they usually were on Sundays; and on Sundays crowds were obliged to go away for want of room. "The whole city, (he said,) seemed to be alarmed." On his return to London, whilst waiting for General Oglethorpe, he preached more frequently than he had done before, and greater numbers of people congregated to hear him. He was invited to accept a very lucrative curacy in London, but he refused it, in order to go and preach to the ignorant inhabitants of Georgia. It speaks highly in praise of his superior character and strength of religious principle, that while in the ardour of youth, when such unexampled popularity as he enjoyed is peculiarly intoxicating, he should resolve to tear himself from London, and refuse an offer which he might have easily persuaded himself was a field of usefulness superior to the deserts of America. Finding that the General was not likely to sail for some time, and having received many and pressing invitations, he went again to Bristol. Multitudes came out on foot to meet him, and some in coaches, a mile without the city; and the people saluted and blessed him as he passed along the street. He preached about five times a week to such large congregations that it was with difficulty he could make his way along the crowded aisles to the reading-desk. Some hung upon the rails of the organ-loft, others climbed upon the leads of the church, and altogether made the church so hot with their breath, that the steam fell from the pillars like drops of rain. When he preached his farewell sermon, and said to the people that perhaps they might

see his face no more, high and low, young and old, burst into tears. Multitudes after the sermon followed him home weeping; the next day he was employed from seven in the morning till midnight in taking and giving spiritual advice to awakened hearers; and he left Bristol secretly in the middle of the night, to avoid the ceremony of being escorted by horsemen and coaches out of the town.

The man who produced this extraordinary effect had many natural advantages. He was something above the middle stature, well-proportioned, though at that time slender, and remarkable for a native gracefulness of manner. His complexion was very fair, his features regular, his eyes small and lively, of a dark blue colour: in recovering from the measles he had contracted a squint with one of them; but this peculiarity in no way lessened the expressive sweetness of his countenance. His voice excelled both in melody and compass, and its fine modulations were happily accompanied by that grace of action which he possessed in an eminent degree, and which has been said to be the chief requisite of an orator. An ignorant man described his eloquence oddly but strikingly, when he said that Mr. Whitefield preached like a lion. So strange a comparison conveyed no unapt notion of the force and vehemence of that oratory which awed his hearers, and made them tremble like Felix before the Apostle. For, believing himself to be the messenger of God, commissioned to call sinners to repentance, he spoke as one conscious of his credentials, with authority and power; yet in all his discourses there was a fervent and melting charity, an earnestness of persuasion, an outpouring of redundant love, partaking the virtue of that faith from which it flowed, inasmuch as it seemed to enter the heart which it pierced, and to heal it as with balm.

On Mr. Whitefield's return from Georgia his popularity was considerably increased. After receiving priest's orders at Oxford from his good friend Bishop Benson, he paid another visit to Bristol, accompanied by Mr. Seward, of Eversham, a young man of education and fortune, and one of the most ardent of Mr. Whitefield's converts. Here he had the use of the churches for two or three Sundays, but soon found they would not be open very long. The Dean was not at home. The Chancellor sent for him, and after much conversation said, "I am resolved, Sir, if you preach or expound anywhere in this diocese till you have a license, I will first suspend, and then excommunicate you." With this declaration of war they parted; but the advantage was wholly on the side of Whitefield, for the day of ecclesiastical discipline was gone by. Laws which long

have slept may sometimes be awakened to ill purposes, rarely to a good one. In the present instance, where discipline was obsolete, and the laws feeble, Mr. Whitefield, though denied the Church, continued to preach very frequently to the numerous societies which rapidly sprung up in different parts of Bristol. The places where they assembled in Baldwin-street, Nicholas-street, Castle-street, Gloucester-lane, and the Back-lane, were denominated "Society Rooms." The chapel of Newgate afforded a vast field of usefulness, which he cultivated to the glory of God and the good of immortal souls. "God, (says he) having given me great favour in the gaoler's eyes, I preached a sermon on the *Penitent thief* to the poor prisoners in Newgate. Many seemed much affected, and I hope the power of the Lord was present to awaken them." The next day, he commenced a regular exposition, and reading prayers to the prisoners. "I opened, (says he,) by enlarging on the conversion of the gaoler; and I trust the same good work will be experienced in this prison before I leave it." Here his ministry was attended with some remarkable manifestations of the Divine power and blessing. The ardour of devotion which glowed in his soul, and burst forth in flames of zeal, gave his discourses all the efficacy which anything human could confer; but his dependence for success was on the influence of the Holy Ghost, who crowned the immensely blessed labours of this great itinerant apostle with some singular tokens of the Divine favour. The faithful exhibition of the doctrines of the Cross soon awakened the enmity of those who hate the light; and after a month's incessant labour, he was compelled, by an order from the mayor and sheriffs, to discontinue his ministry, and abandon the congregation he had collected; solely for this one inexpressible offence, that he had insisted upon the necessity of regeneration or the new birth, and publicly, and from house to house, had ceased not to preach and teach Jesus Christ. The poor inmates of the prison were much distressed at this very arbitrary exhibition of authority. Many of them having been awakened to a sense of religion, and their temporal necessities relieved by the frequent collections made for them, they united in a petition to the mayor to have Mr. Whitefield restored to them; but they petitioned in vain. Mr. Dagge, the keeper, remonstrated, and told them Mr. Whitefield preached agreeably to Scripture; but they were offended at him. "They answered and said unto him, Thou art altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?"

However, short as Mr. Whitefield's labours were in that place, many had reason to bless God for them, having been, within the

walls of that prison, called to the knowledge of His grace, and faith in Him. Mr. Dagge, the keeper of Newgate, so justly eulogised by Dr. Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets*,* was amongst the first fruits of Mr. Whitefield's ministry in Newgate, and long adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour which he professed, by a conversation such as becometh godliness. Such as these, and they were many, will be his joy and crown in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when the hinderers of God's word, who drove him from his station of usefulness, will have to render their awful account before the great Judge of quick and dead, these will be swift witnesses against them at His bar, who is no respecter of persons, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor.

A few of the clergy still continued to countenance him. Mr. Penrose, minister of St. Werburgh's, invited him to his pulpit, where he preached, with great freedom, to a large congregation; and Mr. Gibbs offered him the use of St. Thomas and St. Mary Redcliffe. "The latter of these (says he) I accepted of, and preached to such a congregation as my eyes never yet saw, with great liberty and demonstration of the Spirit."

The next day there was a general expectation of his preaching at St. Nicholas, and thousands had collected before the hour appointed. But the lecturer, who had invited Mr. Whitefield to the pulpit, sent word that the rector had given orders that he should not preach in his church. "After this (writes Mr. Whitefield) we dined with several Christians, friends with the kind keeper of the prison, and rejoiced exceedingly at the thought that we should one day or other sing together in such a place as Paul and Silas did."

The churches being all closed against him, he now found himself compelled to adopt some new method, to prevent his usefulness from being totally annihilated. Before his first embarkation for Georgia, when he talked of going abroad, numbers in Bristol used to reply—"What need of going abroad? Have we not Indians enough at home? If you have a mind to convert Indians, there are colliers enough at Kingswood." In tracing the history of *field preaching*, we find it was first practised at Bristol by Mr. Whitefield, who had the high honour of being the first Methodist who proclaimed the Gospel of the grace of God in the open air. At a very early period of his ministry, he was led to think on this subject. One Sunday, when he was preaching at Bermondsey church, as he tells us, "with great freedom in his heart, and clearness in his voice," to a crowded congrega-

* Memoirs of Savage. See more of this unfortunate person, at p. 367-370.

tion, nearly a thousand people stood in the church-yard during the service, and hundreds went away who could not find room. He was strongly inclined to go out and preach to them from one of the tombstones. "This (he says) put me first upon thinking of preaching without doors. I mentioned it to some friends, who looked upon it as a mad notion. However, we knelt down, and prayed that nothing might be done rashly. Hear and answer, O Lord, for thy Name's sake!"

In the neighbourhood of Bristol is a tract of country called Kingswood; formerly, as its name implies, it had been a royal chase, containing between three and four thousand acres, but it had been gradually appropriated by the several Lords whose estates lay round about its borders; and their title, which for a long time was no better than what possession gave them, had been legalised. The deer had long since disappeared, and the greater part of the wood also; and coal mines having been discovered there, from which Bristol derives its chief supply of fuel, it was now inhabited by a race of people as lawless as the foresters, their forefathers, but far more brutal; and differing as much from the people of the surrounding country in dialect as in appearance. They had, at that time, no place of worship, for Kingswood then belonged to the out-parish of St. Philip and Jacob; and if the colliers had been disposed to come from a distance of three and four miles, they would have found no room in the parish church of a populous suburb.

In the year 1755 a spacious church was erected at Kingswood, and the parish separated from that of St. Philip and Jacob. The Vicar of the old parish, however, enjoyed both livings, after the separation had taken place, to the time of his death, in 1759, when the Rev. Richard Hart was presented, by the corporation of Bristol, to the Vicarage of St. George, where he spent the remainder of his life, consisting of forty-nine years.* He was a very active and laborious minister, and used

* Mr. Hart was a native of Hanham, in the county of Gloucester. His family were of high consideration in the city of Bristol and its vicinity, and the name frequently occurs in the list of its mayors and sheriffs. His grandfather, Sir Richard Hart, knight, was thrice mayor of the city, and represented it in four successive Parliaments. Mr. Hart was entered commoner of Christchurch, Oxford, under the tuition of the Rev. Joseph Jane, whose eminence as a scholar is well known. Some years previous to his death, he resigned his living of Iron Acton, which had been given him by his College; and at his death, in 1794, left Mr. Hart and Mr. Hugh, Rector of Ranceby, in Lincolnshire, executors to his will, having bequeathed his property to pious and charitable purposes. Mr. Hart was ordained by Dr. Martin Benson, Bishop of Gloucester, the same who had laid hands on the apostolic Whitefield. His first settlement was at Warminster, in Wiltshire, as Curate to the Rev. John Rogers, which he held to the period of his appointment to St. George's, Kingswood.

to unite with Mr. Brown, Vicar of Kingston, Mr. Chapman, Vicar of Bradford, and Mr. Johnson, Incumbent Curate of Cirencester, in making preaching excursions about the country. Mr. Hart, as well as the above-named gentlemen, frequently visited Lady Huntingdon when at Bath and Bristol, and often preached at her house with Mr. Whitefield and other eminent ministers of that day. Mr. Hart died at a very advanced period of life, in November, 1808.

Towards the poor colliers at Kingswood, Mr. Whitefield, as he says, had long felt his bowels yearn, for they were very numerous, and yet as sheep having no shepherd. In truth, it was a matter of duty and of sound policy (which is always a duty), that these people should not be left in a state of bestial ignorance—heathens, or worse than heathens, in the midst of a Christian country, and brutal as savages, in the close vicinity of a city which was then in extent, wealth, population, and commercial importance, the second city in England. After much prayer, and such mental conflicts as can be conceived by those only who have devised new and daring efforts in the cause of religion, on the afternoon of Saturday, Feb. 17, 1739, he stood upon a mount, in a place called Rose Green, his *first field pulpit*, and preached from the first verse of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, to as many as came to hear, attracted by the novelty of such an address. "I thought (says he) it might be doing the service of my Creator, who had a mountain for his pulpit, and the heavens for a sounding-board; and who, when his Gospel was refused by the Jews, sent his servants into the highways and hedges." Not above two hundred persons gathered round him, for there had been no previous notice of his intention; and these, perhaps, no ways prepared for his exhortation, were more astonished than impressed by what they heard. But the first step was taken, and Mr. Whitefield was fully aware of its importance. "Blessed be God (he says in his journal) that the ice is now broken, and I have now taken the field. Some may censure me; but is there not a cause? Pulpits are denied, and the poor colliers ready to perish for lack of knowledge." The news flew so swiftly, that the second and third time of preaching out of doors the numbers increased, till the congregation was computed at near twenty thousand. Many of these despised outcasts, who had never been in a place of worship in their lives, received the Gospel with eager gladness, which defies all description.

"The first discovery of their being affected (says Mr. Whitefield) was by seeing the white gutters made by their tears, which plentifully fell down their black cheeks as they came out of the coal-pits. Several hundreds of them were soon brought under deep convictions, which, as

the event proved, happily ended in a sound and thorough conversion. The change was visible to all, though numbers chose to impute it to any thing rather than to the finger of God. As the scene was quite new, and I had just begun to be an extemporary preacher, it often occasioned many inward conflicts. Sometimes, when twenty thousand people were before me, I had not, in my own apprehension, a word to say. But I was never totally deserted, and frequently (for to deny it would be lying against God) so assisted, that I knew, by happy experience, what our Lord meant by saying, 'He that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters.' The open firmament above me, the prospect of the adjacent fields, with the sight of thousands and thousands—some in coaches, some on horseback, and some in trees, and at times all affected and drenched in tears together, to which was added the solemnity of the approaching evening—was almost too much for, and quite overcame me."

Many of the higher ranks went out of Bristol to hear him, and then invited him to preach in an unconsecrated spot in that city, under the blue vault of the heavens. The Bowling-green, the Weavers'-hall in Temple-street, on the steps of the Poor-house without Lawford's-gate, Baptist-hills, and other places in the vicinity of Bristol, were afterwards added to these methodistically consecrated spots, where from *five* to *twenty* thousand are said to have assembled to hear all the words of this life. Having once taken the field, he was encouraged to persevere in so promising a course. All the churches being now shut, and, as he says, if open, not able to contain half that come to hear, he went frequently to Kingswood, where his audience continued to increase:—

"The sun shone very bright (he says); and the people standing in such an awful manner round the mount in the profoundest silence, filled me with a holy admiration. Blessed be God for such a plentiful harvest. Lord, do thou send forth more labourers into thy harvest!"

On another occasion he says:—

"The trees and hedges were full. All was hushed when I began: the sun shone bright, and God enabled me to preach for an hour with great power, and so loud, that all, I am told, could hear me. Blessed be God, the fire is kindled in the country! To behold such crowds standing together in such an awful silence, and to hear the echo of their singing run from one end of them to the other, was very solemn and striking. How infinitely more solemn and striking will the general assembly of the spirits of just men made perfect be, when they join in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb in heaven!"

The former prevalence of heathenish ignorance and brutality among the colliers of Kingswood, and the successful introduction of Christianity by Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Wesley, and their

zealous coadjutors in this noble cause, whereby the manner of the people were considerably civilized, and many ignorant souls brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel, are facts generally known and acknowledged by the enemies as well as the friends of evangelical religion. Many of the awakened amongst the colliers being desirous of having a school established amongst them, intimated their wishes to Mr. Whitefield:—

“Blessed be God (says he), I hope a good work is begun to-day. Having had several notices that the colliers were willing to subscribe, I went to dinner with them to a place called *Two-mile Hill*, and collected above *twenty pounds* in money, and got above *forty pounds* in subscriptions towards building them a charity-school. It was surprising to see with what cheerfulness they parted with their money on this occasion. Was I to continue here, I would endeavour to settle schools all over the Wood, as also in other places, as Mr. Griffith Jones has done in Wales. I have but just time to set it on foot; and hope God will bless the ministry of my honoured friend, Mr. John Wesley, and enable him to bring it to good effect. It is a pity so many little ones as there are in Kingswood should perish for lack of knowledge. Stir up thy power, O Lord, and come amongst them, for the sake of Jesus Christ! After dinner I preached a farewell sermon, and recommended the charity-school to their consideration; and they all seemed willing to assist, either by their money or their labour, and to offer such things as they had. I doubt not but the Lord will prosper this work of my hands upon me.”

This was on the 29th of March, 1739, before Mr. Wesley had ever been in Bristol. The attention of the reader is particularly called to this fact, because all the biographers of Mr. Wesley have been silent on this subject. The time of Mr. Whitefield's embarking the second time for Georgia being very near, and the societies at Bristol having increased rapidly, he and Mr. Seward wrote very pressing letters to Mr. Wesley, inviting him to Bristol without delay. It might have been thought that Mr. Wesley, to whom all places were alike, would have hastened at the call; but he and his brother, instead of taking the matter into calm and rational consideration, consulted the Bible upon the business, and stumbled at uncomfortable texts. When the matter was proposed to the society in Fetter-lane, Mr. Charles Wesley would scarcely bear it to be mentioned. However disposed the brother might have been, that he should have declined the journey without further consultation, the members of the society continued to dispute upon it, till, seeing no probability of coming to an agreement by any other means, they had recourse to sortilege; and the lot decided that Mr.

Wesley should go. On his arrival there on Saturday evening, March 31st, Mr. Whitefield says: "I was much refreshed with the sight of my honoured friend, Mr. John Wesley, whom God's providence has sent to Bristol." This was Mr. Wesley's first visit to Bristol. Mr. Whitefield received him there, and introduced him to persons who were prepared to listen to him with eager and intense belief: "Help him, Lord Jesus, (writes Mr. Whitefield,) to water what thy own right hand hath planted, for thy mercy's sake!"

Having thus provided so powerful a successor, he prepared for his departure. On the following morning, April 1st, he took his leave of his Bristol hearers in three farewell discourses at the Bowling-green, Hanham, and Rose-green; at all which places the congregations were exceedingly large, especially at the latter, where it was thought to exceed twenty thousand persons:—

"As I was returning home (says he), it comforted me exceedingly to hear almost every one blessing me, and wishing me a prosperous voyage in the name of the Lord. Indeed my heart is so knit to the Bristol people, that it could not with so much submission leave them, did not I know that dear Mr. Wesley was left behind to teach them the way of God more perfectly."

He then took his leave of the societies. At Baldwin-street the yard and entry leading to it were so exceedingly crowded, that he was obliged to climb up a ladder, and go over the roof of an adjoining house before he could get to the door. Wherever he took his leave at their places of meeting, there was loud weeping. "Oh," he exclaims, "these partings!" When he forced himself away, crowds were waiting at the door to give him a last farewell, and near twenty friends accompanied him on horse-back:—

"Blessed be God (he says) for the marvellous great kindness he hath shown me in this city! Many sinners, I believe, have been effectually converted. It is unknown what numbers have come to me under convictions, and what multitudes of God's children have been comforted; several thousands of little books have been dispersed among the people; about two hundred pounds collected for the Orphan-house, and many poor families relieved by the bounty of my friend, Mr. Seward. And what gives me the greatest comfort, is the consideration that my dear and honoured friend, Mr. Wesley, is left behind to confirm those that are awakened; so that, when I return from Georgia, I hope to see many bold soldiers of Jesus Christ."

Mr. Whitefield's journey lay through Kingswood; and there the colliers, without his knowledge, had prepared an entertainment for him. As this was a farewell visit, they earnestly

entreated that he would lay the foundation-stone of their school. A person present offered a piece of ground, in case the lord of the manor should refuse, and Mr. Whitefield laid a stone; after which he knelt, and prayed God that the gates of hell might not prevail against their design; the colliers adding a hearty 'Amen.' After giving them a word of exhortation suitable to the occasion, he took his leave, promising that he would come amongst them again on his return to England.

Such was the commencement of the school and preaching-house, afterwards called the "Tabernacle," at Kingswood. In Miles's "Chronological History of the Methodists," and by the biographers of Mr. Wesley, no notice is taken of Mr. Whitefield's having laid the foundation-stone of the school; but all unite in ascribing the work wholly to Mr. Wesley. Mr. Miles says: "In June 1739 the first attempt was made towards erecting a school at Kingswood." A reference to the journals of Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley will prove the correctness of this statement. The foundation-stone was laid by Mr. Whitefield on the second of April, as stated above, two days after Mr. Wesley's arrival in Bristol. It is possible, and even probable, that he was present at this interesting service, but there exists no notice of it in his journal of that date.

On the day before his departure, he set Mr. Wesley an example of field-preaching; and from this period we find him treading in his irregular steps at Bristol; though he confesses that he had been so tenacious of decency and order, that he should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if not done in a church. The multitudes which attended the preaching of Mr. Wesley were great, though not so numerous as those who had flocked to hear Mr. Whitefield; but the sudden impressions and loud cries of the hearers were far greater than any thing we find recorded in the Life and Journals of Mr. Whitefield. It was at the society rooms in Nicholas-street, that Thomas Maxfield, afterwards destined to make so conspicuous a figure in the history of Methodism, was first awakened, under the preaching of Mr. Wesley. He was then a stranger in Bristol, and had come to the meeting from a mere motive of curiosity, and then received those impressions which decided the course of his future life. On Mr. Wesley's first arrival in Bristol, that part of the Methodist discipline was introduced which he had adopted from the Moravians, and male and female bands were formed, as in London, that the members might meet together weekly, to confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another. The rooms in which the societies at Bristol had hitherto met, in Nicholas-street, Baldwin-street, and the Back-lane, were small,

incommodious, and not entirely safe: they determined, therefore, to build a room large enough for all the members, and for as many of their acquaintance as might be expected to attend. Accordingly in the month of May, Mr. Wesley, and some of the leading members of the Methodist body at Bristol, took possession of a piece of ground near St. James's churchyard, in the horse-fair, and, on the 12th of May, "the first stone was laid, with the voice of praise and thanksgiving." This was the *first* Methodist preaching-house built in England. Mr. Wesley had not, at first, the least apprehension or design of being personally engaged, either in the expense of the work or in the direction of it, having appointed eleven trustees, on whom he supposed these burdens would fall; but he quickly found his mistake, on receiving letters from his friends in London, and Mr. Whitefield in particular, stating that neither he nor they would have anything to do with the building, nor contribute anything towards it unless he instantly discharged all the officers, and did everything in his own name. The school at Kingswood—the building of which had not commenced till the middle of June—Mr. Wesley likewise placed in the hands of trustees; but Mr. Whitefield disapproving of the plan, lest the officers should abuse their powers, to the exclusion of the Gospel, went again to Bristol in July—an embargo having been laid upon the shipping, which prevented his sailing for Georgia—and settled Mr. Wesley in full possession of both places, by which he was himself afterwards excluded, on his return from America, when differences of doctrinal points led them on to the right hand, and the other to the left.

The news of Mr. Whitefield's intended visit to Bristol soon spread like wild-fire. At Petty France he was met by a number of friends on horseback; and, before he came within two miles of the city, the multitude increased to a very considerable amount. The people rejoiced at his coming—their hearts seemed to leap for joy, and many thanksgivings were rendered to God on his behalf. The bells rang a merry peal, and he was received as an angel of God. Some days after his arrival he says, "Settled some affairs concerning our brethren, and had a useful conference about many things with my honoured friend Mr. Wesley." Respecting Kingswood, he says,—

"Dined to-day with my honoured fellow-labourer, Mr. Wesley, and many other friends, at Two-mile Hill, in Kingswood, and preached afterwards to several thousand people, colliers, *in the school-house*, which has been carried on so successfully, that the roof is ready to be put up. The design, I think, is good—old as well as young are to be instructed. A great and visible alteration is made in the behaviour of

the colliers. Instead of cursing and swearing, they are heard to sing hymns about the woods ; and the rising generation I hope will be a generation of Christians."

During this visit he preached at the Bowling-green, Hanham, Rose-green, Baptist Mills, and other places, to immense multitudes ; and before his departure, "went to the women and men's societies, settled some affairs, *and united the two leading societies together.*" Two days after he preached his farewell sermon at seven in the morning, to a weeping and deeply-affected audience.

"My heart (says he) was full, and I continued near two hours in prayer and preaching. The poor people shed many tears, and sent up thousands of prayers on my behalf, and would scarce let me go away. Their mites they most cheerfully contributed to the school-house at Kingswood, and proved I think to a demonstration, that they had not received the Word of God in vain. Blessed be God for seeing this increase of his mercy ! Blessed be God for my coming hither to behold some fruits of my labours !"

Having introduced Mr. Wesley as a field-preacher at Gloucester, and other places, Mr. Whitefield embarked for America, August 14, accompanied by his friend Mr. Seward, who died the year following. Soon after Mr. Whitefield's departure, Mr. Charles Wesley—one of the earliest, and certainly not the least efficient apostles of Methodism—who was now pursuing the course of itinerant preaching which Mr. Whitefield had begun, joined his brother at Bristol. The well-known Mr. Joseph Williams, a pious dissenter of Kidderminster, having been led by curiosity, and a religious temper, to hear him preach in the fields, near Bristol, thus describes his manner:—

"I found him standing on a table-board in an erect posture, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven in prayer: he prayed with uncommon fervour, fluency, and variety of expression. He then preached about an hour in such a manner as I scarce ever heard any man preach; though I have heard many a finer sermon—according to the common taste or acceptation of sermons—I never heard any man discover such evident signs of a vehement desire, or labour so earnestly, to convince his hearers that they were all by nature in a sinful, lost, undone state. He showed how great a change a faith in Christ would produce in the whole man ; and that every man who is in Christ—that is, who believes in him unto salvation—is a new creature. Nor did he fail to press upon them how ineffectual their faith would be to justify them, unless it wrought by love, purified their hearts, and was productive of good works. With uncommon fervour he acquitted himself as an ambassador of Christ, beseeching them in his name, and praying them in his stead, to be reconciled to God."

His account of the meeting in the evening is more curious.

The room was thronged, and Mr. Charles Wesley continued alternately singing, praying, and expounding the Scriptures for nearly two hours :

“ Never (says Mr. Williams) did I hear such praying ; never did I see or hear such evident marks of fervency in the service of God. At the close of every petition, a serious Amen—like a gentle rushing sound of waters—ran through the whole audience, with such a solemn air as quite distinguished it from whatever of that nature I have heard attending the responses in the Church service. If there be such a thing as heavenly music upon earth, I heard it there : if there be such an enjoyment—such an attainment—as heaven upon earth, numbers in that society seemed to possess it. As for my own part, I do not remember my heart to have been so elevated in divine love and praise as it was there and then, for many years past, if ever : and an affecting sense and savour thereof abode in my mind many weeks after.”

As we have said, Mr. Whitefield collected some money towards defraying the expenses of erecting a school for the colliers at Kingswood, and performed the ceremony of laying the foundation ; and when he embarked the second time for America, left the work to be carried forward by Mr. Wesley. There was the great difficulty of want of money in the way ; but this was a difficulty which faith would remove ; and in faith Mr. Wesley began building, without having a quarter of the sum necessary for finishing it. But he found persons who were willing to advance money if he would become responsible for the debt ; the responsibility and the property thus devolved upon him, and he immediately made his will, bequeathing it to his brother Charles and Mr. Whitefield. Application was made to Lady Huntingdon ; and her Ladyship, and the Ladies Hastings, with a few other persons of distinction, became liberal contributors to the building of the school. Mr. Ingham and Mr. Bryan Broughton were active in procuring subscriptions, and many of the society in London were generous in their support of the measure. Two masters were provided as soon as the house was fit to receive them, and the well-known John Cennick—one of Mr. Whitefield's most popular and useful fellow-labourers, who possessed a sweet simplicity of spirit, with an ardent zeal in the cause of his Divine Master,—was one of them. He was not in holy orders ; but the practice of lay-preaching—which had at first been vehemently opposed by the Wesleys—had now become inevitably part of their system, and Cennick, who had great talents for popular speaking, laboured also as one of these helpers, as they were called. The societies in London and Bristol were at this time disturbed by the introduction of the Calvinistic tenets. While Mr. Whitefield, from America, was exhorting

the Wesleys to forbearance from controversy, some of the leading members in London were forcing on the separation which he deprecated, and which he foresaw. John Cennick joined the Cavinistic party at Bristol and Kingswood; and, zealous for the glory of that gracious and exalted Master whom he so faithfully served, wrote urgently to Mr. Whitefield, calling upon him to hasten from America, that he might stay the plague.

The imprisonment of Savage the poet—a man whose writings entitle him to an eminent rank in the classes of learning, and whose misfortunes claim a degree of compassion not always due to the unhappy, as they were often the consequences of the crimes of others, rather than his own—was at this time the universal subject of conversation in the upper circles in London, Bath, and Clifton. Deserted by those who had hitherto caressed and applauded him, he was arrested for a small debt, and conveyed to the common gaol of Bristol. Lady Huntingdon, Lady Fanny Shirley, Lady Anne and Lady Frances Hastings, were then in Bath, and, upon hearing from him an account of his condition, immediately sent him relief. A few weeks after her Ladyship, and noble relatives, removed to Clifton, and volunteered, with several persons of distinction, to make a collection for his enlargement; but he treated the proposal with the utmost disdain. He very frequently received visits, and sometimes presents, from his acquaintances; but they did not amount to a subsistence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generosity of Lady Huntingdon, Lady Fanny Shirley, the Ladies Hastings, and his keeper, who did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made some overtures to the creditors for his release, though without effect. Mr. Dagge, the keeper of the prison, was well known to her Ladyship, as the frequent hearer of Mr. Whitefield and the Messrs. Wesley; and hence, we may presume, sprang that humanity which induced him to support Mr. Savage at his own table, without any certainty of recompense; so that he suffered fewer hardships in prison than he had been accustomed to undergo in the greatest part of his life.

“Virtue (says Dr. Johnson) is undoubtedly most laudable in that state which makes it most difficult; and, therefore, the humanity of a gaoler certainly deserves this public attestation; and the man whose heart has not been hardened by such an employment, may be justly proposed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inscription was once engraved ‘To the honest toll-gatherer,’ less honours ought not to be paid ‘To the tender gaoler.’”*

Just at this period, Mr. Whitefield again visited Bristol, where

* Lives of the Poets.

he stayed a considerable time, preaching statedly every day twice, and four times on the Sunday. From his great intimacy with Mr. Dagge, it is presumed he enjoyed many opportunities of conversing with Mr. Savage; but of this we have no certain information. Still there is abundant reason to believe, from some expressions in a letter of Lady Huntingdon's, that he had frequently seen and heard that apostolic man, not only in the chapel of the prison, but at the table of the humane keeper. Certain it is, her Ladyship and noble relatives did not confine their benevolence merely to the relief of his temporal wants; they frequently visited him in prison, and anxiously sought to direct his attention to the vast concerns of an eternal world. During the whole period of his imprisonment, they continued to treat him with the utmost tenderness and civility; yet such was the wayward disposition of this singular character, that, though caressed, esteemed, and liberally supported, he could forget, on a sudden, his danger and his obligations, to gratify the petulance of his wit or the eagerness of his resentment, and employed himself in prison in writing a satirical poem, called "London and Bristol delineated," by which he might reasonably expect that he should alienate those who then liberally contributed to his support and comfort, and provoke those whom he could neither resist nor escape. The resentment of many was raised by some accounts that had been spread of the satire; and Lady Fanny expostulated with him on the impropriety and ingratitude of his conduct. But he disregarded all considerations that opposed his present passions, and readily hazarded all future advantages for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his prominent inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it; nor had opposition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence. The performance, however, was laid aside, at the request of Lady Fanny, whilst she was employed in soliciting assistance for him from several great persons. To Mr. Pope her Ladyship addressed a melancholy account of his sufferings and his wants, with the hope of reviving, in that peevish little man, some feeling of compassion towards his former friend. The application was in vain. A few weeks before the death of this unfortunate and imprudent man, Mr. Pope wrote him a letter, that contained a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in such terms as sudden resentment dictated. What were the particulars of this charge we are not informed; but, from the notorious character of the man, there is reason to fear that Mr. Savage was but too justly accused. He, however, solemnly protested his innocence; but he was very unusually affected at

the accusation. In a few days after he was seized with a disorder, which, at first, was not expected to be dangerous; but, growing daily more languid and dejected, at last a fever seized him, and he expired on the 1st of August, 1743, in the forty-sixth year of his age, leaving behind him a character strangely chequered with vices and good qualities. Lady Huntingdon and Lady Fanny obtained, in the circle of their friends, some small contributions, which they sent to Mr. Dagge, to defray the expenses of the interment.

Anne, Countess of Macclesfield, was the daughter of Lady Mason. Having lived some time upon very uneasy terms with her husband, Lord Macclesfield applied not to the ecclesiastical courts for a divorce, but to the parliament for an act by which his marriage might be dissolved, the nuptial contract totally annulled, and the children of his wife illegitimatized. Her fortune, which was very great, was repaid her, and she was shortly after married to Colonel Brett. Born with a legal claim to honour and affluence, Richard Savage was in two months deprived of it by parliament, and disowned by his mother—doomed to poverty and obscurity, and launched upon the ocean of life, only that he might be swallowed by its quicksands, or dashed upon its rocks. He was unfortunately accused of murder—tried, and condemned to perish by the evidence of an infamous woman and his mother, had not justice and compassion procured for him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit and calamities happened to reach the ear of the Countess of Hertford, who engaged in his support with all the tenderness that is excited by pity, and all the zeal which is kindled by generosity; and, demanding an audience of the Queen, laid before her the whole series of his mother's cruelty, exposed the improbability of an accusation by which he was charged with intent to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and soon convinced her how little his former conduct could deserve to be mentioned as a reason for extraordinary severity. The interposition of this lady was so successful, that he was soon after admitted to bail, and not long afterwards released by the King. It would be difficult to conjecture from what motives his mother could persecute him in a manner so outrageous and implacable, and for what reason she could employ all the arts of malice, and all the snares of calumny, to take away the life of her own son—of a son who never injured her, who was never supported at her expense, and who obstructed no object of pleasure or advantage.

During one of Lady Huntingdon's visits to Bath, she was one

day accosted in the street by a very elderly gentlewoman, who with much politeness inquired her address, intending to do herself the pleasure of calling on her Ladyship. Lady Huntingdon omitted to ask the name of the individual who seemed so anxious to cultivate her acquaintance, and some time after left Bath without hearing or seeing any thing more of the old lady. After the lapse of nearly a year, Lady Huntingdon received a visit from a nobleman, who presented her with the following letter from Mrs. Colonel Brett, dated Old Bond-street, London. Reduced to the brink of the grave by a dangerous illness, she penned this remarkable letter, which was presented by her nephew, the Lord Viscount Tyrconnel, to Lady Huntingdon,—a letter written under the most alarming apprehensions of an awakened conscience, soliciting in the most eager and pressing terms the favour of an interview with her Ladyship:—

Madam,—This will be handed to you by Lord Tyrconnel, who was so obliging as to inform me of your arrival in London. By this time, perhaps, you may have forgotten the person who took the liberty of asking your address in Bath; and I have to apologize for my seeming rudeness in not availing myself of the pleasure I then intended, which, from your great politeness, and the high opinion I entertained of your goodness, I anticipated would be highly gratifying to me, though personally unknown to you. The day after I saw your Ladyship, I was seized with such a violent illness, that I thought I should have died; and even now whilst I write, a shuddering horror steals over me at the recollection of what I then endured from the terrifying apprehensions of an alarmed conscience. When you call to mind some transactions in the life of the miserable individual who now addresses you, perhaps you will recoil with disgust from any association with a being so depraved and so debased. But, oh, dear Madam, recollect for a moment that I am touching my last hour, and that the prospect is dark and dreary as the tomb to which I am so rapidly hastening. I tremble, yes, my knees smite against each other, at the apprehension of the sentence I must receive at that awful tribunal, before which I must so soon appear. But I trust there may be mercy, even for me, vile offender as I am.

“I will not trespass any longer on your Ladyship’s valuable time, but merely to say that Lord Tyrconnel will kindly take charge of any answer which your Ladyship may think proper to make to my letter.

“With the most profound respect for your Ladyship’s character, and veneration of your benevolent and exalted principles, I remain, Madam, your truly humble servant,
“ANNE BRETT.”

What answer Lady Huntingdon gave to Lord Tyrconnel it is not difficult to conjecture; and that her Ladyship saw the c-devant Lady Macclesfield before her removal to an eternal world, and used the utmost tenderness and fidelity in the discharge of

an important duty, there can be but little doubt. It is deeply to be regretted that no memorandum remains that can shed any light on the final close of the life of this singular and extraordinary woman. She died, October 11, 1753, at her house in Old Bond-street, aged above fourscore.

The most popular supplies at this period, at Bristol and Kingswood, were the well-known Howel Harris, John Edwards, afterwards of Leeds, Thomas Adams, Herbert Jenkins, James Relly,* and Edward Godwin.†

* Mr. Relly, a native of North Wales, was a wild, ungovernable youth, and addicted to bad company. In one of Mr. Whitefield's excursions through Wales, young Relly agreed, with some other lads of his own stamp, to go and hear Mr. Whitefield preach, that he might have an opportunity of laughing at the Methodists. They commenced their sport by making a noise, and ridiculing the preacher, to the disturbance of the congregation. At length, Mr. Whitefield's discourse, which was delivered with his usual energy, so riveted the attention of young Relly, that, when his companions wished him to retire, he resolved to stay behind, and from that time became serious. Soon after, forming an acquaintance with Mr. Whitefield, he became one of his most strenuous supporters, in which he was joined by his brother John; and, in a little time, both commenced preachers of that faith they had so often laboured to destroy. Mr. James Relly was first situated near Nasboth, in South Wales, where he continued to preach, in connexion with the Calvinistic Methodists, for some years. During his residence at this place, he took frequent journeys to Bristol; and on his way, would often stop at Kingswood, and other places, to discourse with the colliers. Mr. Relly afterwards separated from Mr. Whitefield, and removed to London: in process of time, he took the meeting-house in Bartholomew-close, where he continued to preach till his death, April 25, 1778. His remains were interred in the Baptist burial-ground, Maze Pond, Southwark, where a neat monument is erected to his memory. The term *Antinomian* is said to have been first applied to him by Mr. Wesley, and it has been fixed upon his followers ever since. He published a variety of pieces in defence of his peculiar sentiments—a volume of hymns, and an elegy on the death of Mr. Whitefield. There are two portraits of him; the one engraved by June, the other by Sylvester Harding.

† Mr. Godwin was the eldest son of the Rev. Edward Godwin, for upwards of forty years minister of the Presbyterian church in Little St. Helen's, London. His mother was the daughter of a worthy ejected minister, who was a considerable loser by his nonconformity, and widow of the Rev. Samuel Jones, of Tewkesbury, who was the tutor of Secker, Bishop Butler, Drs. Chandler and Gifford, and the Rev. Rr. Pearsall of Taunton. Though not trained to the ministry, Mr. Edward Godwin commenced preacher in Mr. Whitefield's connexion but died in early life. He was very useful in London, and other places, where he laboured very diligently, and was esteemed a very popular speaker. Whilst resident at Bristol, he published several sermons, preached before the Tabernacle Society; and also a small volume of hymns, dedicated to Marmaduke Gwyn, Esq. of Garth, the father of Mrs. Charles Wesley—a brief Account of God's Work in the British Army in Flanders, Christian Tales, and an Account of God's dealings with himself; and other publications. His brother was a Dissenting minister at Guestwick, in Norfolk, where he died in November 1772, in the fiftieth year of his age.

This gentleman was father of Mr. William Godwin, well known to the world by his "Political Justice," and other writings. He married the celebrated Mary Woolstonecroft, the author of "The Rights of Women," and left a daughter, Mary, who married in December, 1816, the late Percy Bysshe Shelly, Esq., the poet. He was drowned in 1822, leaving a son, Percy Florence, heir to the

During the four years that Mr. Whitefield was absent in America, the cause of Methodism rose to great popularity at Bristol and Kingswood, by the zeal and eloquence of his fellow-labourers. The most popular preachers amongst the itinerant labourers who at this period supplied those congregations, were Mr. Relly and Mr. Godwin. The former, when writing to his brother, who was then preaching at the Tabernacle, in London, says:—

“ There seems to be a shaking among the dry bones at Bristol ; I trust the scales will fall from their eyes shortly. The flock at Kingswood begins to spread its wings, and flee away towards Jesus. I found God amongst them these two Sabbath-days in a glorious manner. I go from hence to Bath once a week, and the Lord seems to revive his work among his people there. On Thursday many people of fashion heard me, and were affected with the discourse ; indeed, the Word seems to run and be glorified among them. Oh that it may take deep root in all their hearts ! My greatest grief at present is to see the Church fallen from her first love, and iniquity running down our streets, and very few laying it to heart, to see the watchman leave the walls, and keep silence while hell prevails. Oh that the Almighty God would bow the heavens, and make known his power on the earth, that hell might quake and devils tremble, while God’s favourites are gathered home ; for surely I long to see the nations bow to Christ’s sceptre, that we may hear nothing but hallelujah and hosannah through the camp of God.”*

Baronetcy of his grandfather, Sir Timothy Shelly, Bart., of Castle Goring, county of Sussex. Mrs. Shelly is also a writer, but partakes of some of the fatal sentiments of her father and mother. Two of the sisters of Mary Woolstonecroft many years since kept a respectable school in Dublin ; but they were Socinians, members of the anti-trinitarian meeting in Sand-street, under the pastoral care of the late Dr. Moody.

* Christian History, page 214. This work was published in numbers, in 1747, and consists of a collection of letters from Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Howel Davies, Howel Harris, Adams, Edwards, Godwin, Kinsman, Relly, and several of the early preachers in the Tabernacle connexion, relating to the progress of the Gospel in England, Wales, Scotland, and America.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Mr. Daniel Rowlands—Mr. Howel Davies—Effects of their preaching at Bristol—Mr. Whitefield visits Bristol—Letter to Lady Huntingdon—Letter to the Countess Delitz—Portsmouth Tabernacle—Lady Huntingdon visits Bristol—Mr. Whitefield in Bristol—Lady Huntingdon's Benevolence to the Prisoners—Commencement of the Tabernacle—Letters from Lord Chesterfield and Lord Bath—Mr. Charles Wesley—Opening of the Tabernacle—Mrs. Grinfield—Illness of Mr. Wesley—Mrs. Charles Wesley's illness—Lady Huntingdon attends her—Mr. Whitefield's Letter to Mr. Charles Wesley—Mr. Croom—Mr. Cornelius Winter—Mr. Hogg—Mr. Shipman—Letter to Mr. Winter—Letter from Lady Huntingdon to Mr. Shipman—Mr. Shipman's Death—Lord Barham—Lady Huntingdon's Chapel opened—Mr. Owen—Letters to Mr. Evans—New Chapel opened.

THE Calvinistic Methodists were now strengthened by the accession of the Welsh beneficed clergyman, Mr. Daniel Rowlands, Rector of Llangeitto and Chaplain to the Duke of Leinster, and Mr. Howel Davies, Rector of Prengast, near Haverfordwest, men of energetic and extraordinary eloquence. Men unfettered with worldly cares, and almost unconnected with the world, these apostolic men lived alone, and were striking emblems of primitive simplicity. Their manner of life carried the mind many centuries back, and set it down in the apostolic age. Such undissembled piety and such unaffected integrity are not the general characteristics of latter days. Wholly devoted to their Master's work, and treading in his steps, these indefatigable labourers went about continually preaching the doctrines of the Cross; and the great Head of the Church was graciously pleased to make manifest by them the savour of his grace. Their audiences were very large wherever they were called to proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God; and the stated number of communicants at the monthly sacraments in their churches, was seldom less than two thousand, and often more than four thousand. Mr. Whitefield, being present on an occasion of this sort, says—"The power of God at the sacrament, under the ministry of Mr. Rowlands, was enough to make a person's heart burn within him. At seven of the morning have I seen perhaps ten thousand from different parts, in the midst of a sermon, crying *Gogunniant bendyitti*, ready to leap for joy."

Deeply acquainted with the Gospel scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ, they published the glad tidings with all the fervour

and affection of men who experimentally knew its inestimable worth. They often added tears to their entreaties, when, after they had displayed the unsearchable riches of Christ, they invited the miserable, the poor, and the naked, to come and partake of them. Yet, conscious that no human persuasion could prevail with man to accept a free and plenteous redemption, with earnest supplications they recommended those whom they addressed to the Spirit of Grace, and to the efficacious influences of His power. This part of their office was performed in such rapturous and elevated strains of devotion, that whole congregations became melted, borne down, and overcome, while the sweet and precious accents dropped from their tongues.

Having kindled a flame through both South and North Wales, they were now invited to Bristol, by Mr. Howel Harris, to supply Mr. Whitefield's congregations during his protracted absence in America. With a force of eloquence and comprehension of mind which excited the idolatry of their friends and the astonishment of their foes, these apostolic men exercised their ministry in Bristol and Kingswood for several weeks. Whenever they preached, immense multitudes thronged around them, very many of whom were powerfully affected by the Welsh fire which was displayed in the animated addresses of these Cambrian brethren. No sooner had they commenced speaking in the name of their Divine Master, than they forgot themselves and everything around them. They thought only of their subject—Him who died upon the cross to save the chief of sinners. Their genius warmed and kindled as they went on. They seemed to dart fire into their audiences. Torrents of impetuous and irresistible eloquence swept along their feelings and convictions. They had, indeed, but few opportunities of testifying the Gospel of the grace of God within the city churches, being excluded from them for the unpardonable crime of collecting crowded congregations, and being attended with an eagerness and multitude that awakened the envy and enmity of their brethren. But the displays of Gospel grace under the ministry of these faithful labourers in the vineyard, were surprisingly great from the beginning; and vast multitudes were called to the happy experience of the salvation of Jesus by their ministrations there.*

* Of Mr. Howel Davies, a brief memoir has been given in the "Evangelical Magazine" for 1814. He died the same year as Mr. Whitefield. Mr. Rowlands survived some years. A volume of his sermons was translated from the original British, and published by subscription, in 1774. Both these excellent men were the steady friends of Lady Huntingdon, and often supplied her chapels, with great utility to the cause of God; for the Lord was pleased to make known by them the savour of grace in every place.

On Mr. Whitefield's return to England, after an absence of nearly four years, he was invited to Lady Huntingdon's house at Chelsea, as soon as he had landed; and after preaching a few times to crowded and brilliant auditories at her Ladyship's residence, visited Bristol, where he was received with every demonstration of joy. Amazing multitudes flocked to hear him, and great and small bore testimony to the power with which he spoke. But in the midst of his labours he was summoned to London by the Countess, who wrote to inform him that several of the nobility desired to hear him. Thither he accordingly repaired, and a whole circle of titled hearers in a few days attended, and were not contented with hearing him once, but desired that the favour might be repeated. The illness of her Ladyship having put a check to these proceedings, the ensuing spring he returned to Bristol, whither she also intended to follow, as soon as the state of her health would permit her to move. From Bristol he went to Portsmouth, where he awaited with impatience some tidings of her Ladyship's health, having left her very much indisposed at his departure from London.

"This morning (says he) your Ladyship's unexpected letter surprised me. Your writing under such weakness put me in mind of Mr. Cennick, who, when his friends advised him not to write, on account of his illness, made this reply—'What! would you have my Master come and find me idle?' I only wish I could bear it for your Ladyship; but then your crown would not be so bright, nor the inward purity of your heart so great.

"Next Monday evening I intend, God willing, to set out for Salisbury, and from thence shall write to your Ladyship again. Yesterday I wrote to the Countess Delitz and Lady Fanny, but did not send the letters to you, not knowing but you might have set out for Bristol. My brother would be highly delighted to have your Ladyship under his roof. That God may restore you to perfect health, and make you a blessing to thousands, is, and shall be, the constant prayer of your Ladyship's obliged and sympathizing servant!"

Mr. Whitefield's visit to Portsmouth was attended with remarkable success. In a letter to the Countess Delitz, sister to Lady Chesterfield, he says, "The preaching of the Cross hath been much blessed here. Multitudes daily attend, and many are much affected. It would please your Ladyship to see the alteration that has been made in a week's time. But what cannot God do? All things are possible to him." This was Mr. Whitefield's first visit to Portsmouth. It had been visited a few years previous by Mr. Cennick, who preached in the open air to a very numerous congregation. He was followed by Messrs. Adams, Meredith, Godwin, and others, in connexion with Mr. Whitefield. In November 1747, Mr. Godwin was

sent thither, and his ministry proved very acceptable. When writing to Mr. Howel Harris, he says, "I am received with all imaginable love and respect, and our congregations are very large. Our barn at Gosport was well filled, and God has given me an open door to the hearts of many." Mr. Godwin was followed by Mr. John Stevens, who experienced great opposition, particularly at Gosport, where he was often pelted with eggs, dirt, and stones, which several times narrowly escaped his head. About this time several serious persons, some of whom were members of Mr. Williams's church at Gosport, and others of Mr. Norman's at Portsmouth, formed themselves into a society, and, by a small weekly subscription, defrayed the expenses of the preachers who visited them. Their number was considerably increased, by the Divine blessing, in three visits paid them by Mr. Whitefield, and by the labours of ministers in connexion with him. At length, in 1754, they erected a place of worship, fifty-three feet by thirty, which they called "The Tabernacle." For about fifteen years the congregation was supplied by Messrs. Adams, Croom, Vines, Hogg, Cornelius Winter, and others; but this mode of supplying proving inconvenient and expensive, they determined on having a regular minister; and, being formed into a church, made choice of the Rev. Thomas Tuppen, then in the Tabernacle connexion, who was ordained to the pastoral office April 17, 1770. In 1773, the congregation had so much increased that the Tabernacle was insufficient for their accommodation; it was therefore taken down, and a new place, sixty feet by forty, with three galleries, erected in its stead; and which also was soon filled with an overflowing congregation. Such was the origin of the church and congregation over which the late Rev. John Griffin presided for so many years, with such honour to himself and utility to the cause of God, and for whose accommodation a spacious chapel, ninety-five feet by seventy-five, with deep galleries, was erected in 1813, at an expense of more than ten thousand pounds, and opened in the month of September in that year by the Rev. Rowland Hill, and Mr. Jay of Bath.

Continued indisposition appears to have detained Lady Huntingdon in London till the beginning of June. During this interval, after preaching at Portsmouth, Gosport, and other places with signal success, Mr. Whitefield returned to Bristol, where he was occupied in his usual way, and was attended with an eagerness and multitude more remarkable than on former occasions. Not long after his arrival, he wrote thus to the Countess:—

"Since I wrote last to your Ladyship, several things have occurred

to prove that Providence directed my way hither. I have preached three times, and each time our Lord caused the Word to leave a blessing behind it. Yesterday, congregations were very large in the fields. This evening I am to preach again ; and to-morrow, God willing, I set out for Wales. Though my brother is sorry for the occasion, yet he rejoices very much that he is to be honored with your Ladyship's company. I believe you will find his house very commodious, and I am persuaded your Ladyship's coming will prove a blessing to him. I earnestly pray the Lord of all lords to bless the waters for the recovery of your health. Though I want to die myself, yet methinks I would have others live, especially such as, like your Ladyship, are placed upon a pinnacle, and in a particular manner set up as lights in the world. May the ever-blessed God fill you with all his fulness ; and, after you have done and suffered what he hath appointed for you here, translate you to partake of an exceeding and eternal weight of glory in his kingdom hereafter !"

On the 23rd of June, Mr. Whitefield returned from his Welsh expedition, and joined Lady Huntingdon, who had taken up her residence at the house of his brother in Bristol.

"Yesterday (says he, in a letter to Mr. Hervey), God brought me here, after having carried me a circuit of about eight hundred miles, and enabled me to preach, I suppose, to upwards of a hundred thousand souls. I have been in eight Welsh counties, and I think we have not had one dry meeting. The work in Wales is much upon the advance, and likely to increase daily. Had my dear Mr. Hervey been there to have seen the simplicity of so many dear souls, I am persuaded he would have said—*Sit anima mea cum Methodistis!* But every one to his part. Good Lady Huntingdon is here, and goes on in her usual way, doing good. She is recovered from her indisposition. I hope this will find you recovered also."

As long as Christ has a Church on earth, and disciples animated with zeal for the glory of his name, the Countess of Huntingdon will live, and enjoy a distinguished niche in the temple of God. The world has its heroes, whom it holds up to universal admiration in the page of history—here the Church of Christ presents to us one of hers. The moment her Ladyship arrived at Bristol, her active spirit began to devise fresh plans for the cultivation of those who hated that light, which her burning zeal for the salvation of immortal souls longed to pour in torrents on all those within her reach. Her compassionate heart, tenderly sympathizing in the distress of her fellow-creatures, and breathing forth the most affectionate ardour for their eternal interests, induced her to visit the prisons, the house of pestilence, and the chambers of mortal disease, wherever the voice of misery invited her, bearing with her the mercy of the Gospel to souls on the very brink of eternity. Cessation from labour was a state of the most painful mortifi-

cation to her Ladyship, and called forth the severest exercise of self-denial. The Lord himself was a man of incessant labour from the day he entered on his ministry, till the hour when he expired on the cross. The venerable Countess inherited no small portion of her Master's spirit, and persevered in active service from the first hour that she commenced her spiritual course, till called to a crown of eternal blessedness in heaven. Never weary of well-doing, on this, as on former visits to Bristol and the Hot-wells, her Ladyship and the Ladies Hastings (her sisters-in-law), renewed their benevolent intentions towards the poor debtors in Newgate. Several ladies of rank were enlisted in this work of mercy, and Lady Huntingdon had the heartfelt satisfaction of liberating many miserable individuals whose debts were under ten pounds.* Some were restored to their families, and others, by her munificence, were enabled to prosecute their lawful callings with honour and credit. Facts like these are the beauty and glory of history, and reflect additional lustre on the character of this venerable woman.

Great was the success of Mr. Whitefield's labours at this time in Bristol and Kingswood. With irresistible zeal he proclaimed to listening thousands the glad tidings of salvation, and a harvest of immortal souls was reaped, exceeding what results from the painful exertions of many a faithful minister during the course of a long life of active labour in the cause of God. The vast increase of converts, and the affectionate attachment which multitudes felt for his apostolic ministry, now induced him to think of erecting a more commodious place of worship for their accommodation. In this noble work he was ably assisted by Lady Huntingdon, who exerted her influence in procuring pecuniary support from many of those persons of rank with whom she was connected. To Lords Chesterfield, Bolingbroke, and Bath, she addressed letters, soliciting their aid towards the erection of the Tabernacle at Bristol. Her Ladyship lived on the most intimate terms with all her contemporaries distinguished by wit, politeness, philosophy, learning, or the talents of public life—notwithstanding, the increasing reproach of the Cross which she gloried to brave had made a vast hiatus between their pursuits, as well as temper, and her own. Though some of her former intimate acquaintances had long forsaken and shunned her, yet she was honoured with the friendship and advice of several distinguished for classical knowledge and superior talents, and eminent as statesmen and parliamentary orators. It is much to be lamented that the answer of Lord Bolingbroke

* See "Gentleman's Magazine," for 1749.

has not been preserved; but the letters of Lords Chesterfield and Bath, statesmen in every trait of personal character totally dissimilar to each other, will be perused at the present day with no small interest.

The letters of these great men are as dissimilar as their characters. Lord Chesterfield's politeness and insincerity are quite characteristic; but Lord Bath appears to have had his heart touched by the transforming influence of Divine truth. He was frequent in his attendance on the ministry of Mr. Whitefield, and contributed liberally towards the Orphan-house in Georgia, and the building of Tottenham-court chapel. Lord Chesterfield's letter is dated,

“June 18th, O.S., 1749.

“Really there is no resisting your Ladyship's importunities. It would ill become me to censure your enthusiastic admiration of Mr. Whitefield. His eloquence is unrivalled—his zeal inexhaustible, and not to admire both would argue a total absence of taste, and an insensibility not to be coveted by any body. Your Ladyship is a powerful auxiliary to the Methodist Cabinet; and I confess, notwithstanding my own private feelings and sentiments, I am infinitely pleased at your zeal in so good a cause. You must have twenty pounds for this new Tabernacle whenever you think proper to demand it—but I must beg *my name* not to appear in *any way*. Lady Chesterfield sends her best compliments, and will reply to your letter in due time. She is active amongst her friends, and I doubt not but you will reap the benefit of her solicitations. It is gratifying to learn that the air of Clifton agrees so well with your family. Tell Lady Fanny I have not received an answer to my last letter. With best wishes for the success of all your disinterested acts of benevolence to the human race and kind regards to all your circle, I remain your Ladyship's most faithful friend and servant,

“CHESTERFIELD.”

Very different is the letter of the Earl of Bath:—

“Madam,—It gives me unfeigned pleasure to hear of the good effects of Mr. Whitefield's preaching at Bristol, and amongst the colliers; and I feel indebted to your Ladyship for an opportunity of contributing towards the furtherance of so good a cause, firmly persuaded that the finger of an unerring Providence will point out some other, and far distant lands—yet uncultivated, yet unblessed with the light of divine truth—where the ministration of our excellent friend, aided by your Ladyship's liberality and zeal, shall perform those mighty deeds which shall overwhelm generations, yet unborn, with gratitude to the kind Author of all our mercies for his astonishing goodness displayed toward the sinful race of man. Mocked and reviled as Mr. Whitefield is by all ranks of society, still I contend that the day will come when England will be just, and own his greatness as a reformer, and his goodness as a minister of the most High God.

“When shall we have the pleasure of seeing your Ladyship in London, and hearing those great and excellent men, who have preached

so frequent in your drawing-rooms to such crowded and such distinguished assemblies? Many are inquiring after you—many feel the loss of your bright example—and many are desirous of knowing the narrow path to eternal life. I earnestly beg your Ladyship's intercession on my behalf; that, amidst the abustle, the cares and anxieties of public life, I may have my mind roused only by the great concerns of an eternal world, and fixed on those scenes of immortality to which we are all quickly hastening.

"Present my respects to Lady Fanny, Lady Anne, &c. &c.; and believe me, with every sentiment of respect and veneration for your worth, your Ladyship's unalterable friend,

"BATH.

"P.S. I have sent *fifty pounds* to your Ladyship's banker, to be placed to your credit."

Nothing remarkable in the history of the Tabernacle in Bristol seems to have occurred from this period till the year 1752, when Lady Huntingdon again removed to that place, shortly after the marriage of her eldest daughter, the Lady Elizabeth Hastings, to her cousin Lord Rawden, afterwards Earl of Moira; and renewed her exertions towards the completion of the building, which was then in a state of forwardness. Mr. Charles Wesley was at this time much with her Ladyship, and frequently preached and administered the Sacrament at her house to many distinguished personages. He had fixed his residence in Bristol, and had lately married Sarah, youngest daughter of Marmaduke Gwynne, Esq., of Garth, a magistrate and gentleman of fortune and ancient family in Brecknockshire. With this lady, who was possessed of good sense, piety, and agreeable accomplishments, Lady Huntingdon formed a very close intimacy and friendship, which continued to the day of her death. The greater part of the succeeding year her Ladyship spent at Bristol and the neighbourhood. Her health being considerably improved, she thought of removing to Bath for the winter, and only waited to be present at the dedication of the Tabernacle. In the month of November Mr. Whitefield repaired to Bristol:—

"On Sunday (he says) I opened the new Tabernacle. It is large, but not half large enough; would the place contain them, I believe nearly as many would attend as in London. On Tuesday, at seven in the evening, I preached in the open air to a great multitude: all was hushed and exceedingly solemn; the stars shone bright, and then, if ever, by an eye of faith I saw Him who called them all by their names. My soul was filled with a holy ambition, and I longed to be one of those who shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. My hands and body at this and at other times were pierced with cold; but what are outward things when the soul is warmed with the love of God?"

Mr. Wesley had at that time, by his diligence and zeal, brought

his life into great danger. By the advice of Dr. Fothergill he retired to Lewisham to reap the advantages of country air, and rest, which he so much required. Almost at the same time, Mrs. Charles Wesley caught the small-pox at Bristol, Lady Huntingdon came from Bath to attend her through the disease: this confirmed a friendship they had formed before, and of which she never spoke without the most lively gratitude. During her illness, Mr. Charles Wesley was with his brother in London, who was then supposed to be near death. It was a trying season to both, for he could not, on the first intimation leave the chapels and their congregations: and every post, he feared would bring him intelligence that his beloved wife was no more. Mr. Whitefield's letter to Mr. Charles Wesley on this most trying occasion is truly affectionate:—

“I cannot help sending after you a few sympathizing lines. The Lord help and support you! May a double spirit of the ascending Elijah descend and rest on the surviving Elisha! Now is the time to prove the strength of Jesus yours. A wife, a friend, a brother, ill together! Well, this is our comfort—all things shall work together for good to those that love God. Glad should I be to reach heaven first; but faith and patience hold out a little longer. Yet a little while and we shall be all together with our common Lord. I commend you to his everlasting love.”

Lady Huntingdon was unremitting in her kind attentions to Mrs. Wesley. Her Ladyship hurried Mr. Whitefield to London, to relieve Mr. Charles Wesley, and enable him to return to Bristol to see his beloved partner, before she was summoned to another world. She was for twenty-two days in imminent danger. He rode down to visit her twice, at the risk of his own health, and returned to serve the public. His first babe, a lovely boy under two years, took the infection from his mother, and was buried before his next return home. Some of his affecting funeral hymns, written on this occasion, describe a father's sufferings, and express his tender gratitude for the spared life of the mother.

Mr. Whitefield reached London before Mr. Wesley had retired to Lewisham, and an affecting interview took place between these apostolic men. How deeply Mr. Whitefield felt the impending blow which was to separate him from a friend and a brother, his own words will best describe. To Mr. Wesley he writes thus:—

“If seeing you so weak when leaving London distressed me, the news and prospect of your approaching dissolution hath quite weighed me down. I pity myself and the church, but not you. A radiant throne awaits you, and ere long you will enter into your Master's joy. Yonder he stands with a massy crown, ready to put it on your head,

amidst an admiring throng of saints and angels. But I, poor I, that have been waiting for my dissolution these nineteen years, must be left behind to grovel here below. Well, this is my comfort, it cannot be long ere the chariots will be sent even for worthless me. If prayers can detain them, even you, reverend and very dear Sir, shall not leave us yet; but if the decree is gone forth, that you must now fall asleep in Jesus, may he kiss your soul away, and give you to die in the embrace of triumphant love! If in the land of the living, I hope to pay my last respects to you next week. If not, reverend and dear Sir, farewell! *I præ, sequar, etsi non passibus æquis.* My heart is too big, tears trickle down too fast, and I fear you are too weak for me to enlarge. May underneath you be Christ's everlasting arm! I commend you to his never-failing mercy, and am, very dear Sir, your most affectionate, sympathizing, and afflicted younger brother in the Gospel of our common Lord,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."

Mr. Whitefield felt most keenly the trying situation of his friend, Mr. Charles Wesley. During the transient visit of the latter to Bristol, he was most anxiously solicitous to have the earliest intelligence, to relieve the torturing suspense his mind endured. On the 13th of December he wrote thus to Mr. Charles Wesley:—

"The Searcher of Hearts alone knows the sympathy I have felt for you and yours, and what suspense my mind hath been in concerning the event of your present circumstances. I pray and inquire, and pray again, always expecting to hear the worst. Ere this can reach you, I expect the lot will be cast either for life or death. I long to hear, that I may partake like a friend either of your joy or sorrow. Blessed be God for that promise whereby we are assured that *all things shall work together for good to those that love him.* This may make us at least resigned when called to part with our Isaacs. But who knows the pain of parting when the wife and the friends are conjoined? To have the desire of one's eyes cut off with a stroke, what but grace, omnipotent grace, can enable us to bear it? But, who knows, perhaps the threatened stroke may be recalled? Surely the Lord of all lords is preparing you for further usefulness, by these complex trials. I can scarcely mention any body now but dear Mrs. Wesley. Pray let me know how it goes with you. My wife truly joins in sympathy and love. Night and day, indeed, you are remembered by me."

Fearing Lady Huntingdon would materially injure her health by her long and close attention to Mrs. Wesley, Mr. Whitefield wrote to her thus on the 15th of December:—

"I am yet kept in suspense about Mrs. Wesley, and have been much concerned lest, by intense sympathy, your Ladyship should contract an illness yourself. But your Ladyship hath long since learnt that as your day is, so shall your strength be. I pray the Lord of all lords to lengthen out your important life, and make you ten thousand times

more useful than ever, long after my worthless head is laid in the silent grave."

Not long after this, a letter from Lady Huntingdon announced the pleasing intelligence of Mrs. Wesley having been pronounced out of danger by the faculty, who entertained sanguine hopes of her speedy restoration. Mr. Whitefield felt truly rejoiced, and public thanks were returned at the Tabernacle for her recovery.*

About this period the Rev. John Croom was first introduced to the congregation at Bristol. He was the son of persons in humble life—Quakers by profession. His mother was a public speaker. We seldom see the descendants of the Friends violate the rules of decency; but Mr. Croom was an exception to this remark. He went with the multitude to do evil, and herded with the baser sort, utterly casting off the gravity which is the usual characteristic of the Quakers: retaining nothing but the plain language to which from his infancy he had been accustomed, and being studiously careful not to address people by the usual titles significant of respect.

Some years previous to this, Mr. Whitefield had commenced his immensely successful career of field-preaching upon Hampton Common, and other places in Gloucestershire. Several of his faithful associates preached in these Methodistically consecrated places after him; among whom was Mr. Howel Harris, whose energetic powers, zeal, and learning, drew amazing multitudes to hear him. To a man of Mr. Croom's disposition it furnished matter of high entertainment to be present at field-preaching; and he attended upon Mr. Harris with no other design than to be entertained, and to mock the preacher. But his attention was arrested, his conscience convinced, and he returned home another man than he went out. From this time he statedly attended the ministry of the Methodists at Rodborough, and entered a member of the society. He was at length encouraged by Mr. Adams to take the lead of the society and to speak to cases as they were proposed to him; which he did with such judgment, penetration, and success, that many looked to him with great confidence, and were prepared to receive his instructions more publicly; for it was expected that he would one day address them from the pulpit.

The early part of the year 1752, Mr. Croom made his first visit to Castle Coomb, Wilts, not as a preacher, but to hold conference with a little prosperous society, which in that village walked with great decorum, and received help from the ministers who preached at the Tabernacle in Bristol. He conversed with and exhorted their society, to their great edification and

* Whitefield's Letters, vol. ii. Mrs. Wesley survived her husband many years, and died December 28, 1822, aged ninety-six.

comfort. It is more than probable Mr. Adams encouraged that visit probationary to public services, as it was usual with him to take this method, when he found it expedient to countenance a disposition for the ministerial work ; and as, in a very few weeks after, Mr. Croom went to the same place, directed by Mr. Adams to supply the pulpit. From this time he became a regular supply at all the places in the Tabernacle connexion. He usually resided in the neighbourhood of Horsely, in Gloucestershire, from whence he walked to Bristol, often continuing his labours till Saturday noon, and walking back on the Monday to resume them, in the strength of a very temperate refreshment. The strength of his body was equal to the zeal of his mind ; and the narrow circumstances of the people who were concerned in the cause of God under the Methodist denomination, both in Bristol and in the country, would not admit of gratuities in return for his labours, favourable to easy conveyance. A compensation for the suspension of manual labour, during absence from the loom, was as much as he had reason to expect at that period : but his sphere of usefulness enlarging, by the advice and consent of his friends, he parted with his loom : for which, in after years, he expressed his concern, often doubting the propriety of that part of his conduct. Rodborough, Dursley (latterly Wootton-Under-edge), and other places in Gloucestershire ; Castle Coomb, Christian Malford, and Chippenham, in Wilts ; Bristol, Portsmouth, and other places in Hants, partook of his labours, stated or occasional.

In 1761, Mr. Croom was introduced into the London Tabernacle pulpit. His first appearance in the congregation was on the Sabbath-day morning, in a very plain but decent dress, with his hair undressed and lank. He chose Acts xv. 36, for his introductory address, "And see how they do." He secured himself from reproach by an artless acknowledgment that he did not rank with preachers of eminence ; but that, having obtained mercy of the Lord, and having tasted that he is gracious, he did attempt to speak forth his praise, and encourage poor souls to trust in him. He signified that nothing more should be expected from a poor, plain countryman, in his straight hair, than an endeavour to do good to souls : and that he came there in providence to know how they stood with God, and to see what proof there was of his power and presence among them. His appearance and sermon had an astonishing effect. The society and serious part of the congregation were enlivened by and delighted with him ; and as he became more known, he was styled the John Bunyan of the age.

The mention of a well-authenticated circumstance is due to his memory, and may serve to show the efficacy with which his

preaching was received :—A man of genteel appearance, turned the middle of life, was observed by a person who generally had a fixed seat in the area of the London Tabernacle, to come and hear very attentively. After having repeated his attendance on the same spot, at the close of one of the opportunities, he entered into conversation with the person who observed him. He made inquiries concerning Mr. Croom, adding, that he himself was not a person wholly illiterate—that he had been favoured with a good education—and that while Mr. Croom's evident want of education met his prejudices, his prejudices were overcome by something that he could not account for; that he never before heard what he heard from him; and that, notwithstanding he turned into the Tabernacle from mere curiosity, and the first sight of so plain a man so much raised his disgust, that he was prepared to hear nothing to advantage, yet he could not keep from attending his word; and acknowledged that Mr. Croom gained upon him every time he heard him.

Mr. Whitefield had Mr. Croom in London for several weeks before his last embarkation for America. Another visit, while Mr. Whitefield was in America, closed his connexion with London. His last visit to the Bristol congregation was in the year 1770, when, through the death of Mr. Adams, and the great scarcity of preachers the Connexion was reduced to, he was detained, though sorely against his will, eleven months. At the expiration of that time, he cheerfully resigned the pulpit to Mr. Cornelius Winter, who, at the invitation of Messrs. Collet, Ireland, and Hogg, relieved him. Here it was that he first discovered the symptoms of a painful disease, which had advanced so far as to require a surgical operation, in order to the probability of a cure; but he would only consent to use palliative remedies. His complaint, therefore, gained upon him; notwithstanding which, he made frequent journeys into Wilts, making the congregations at Christian Malford, Chippenham, and Castle Coomb, the objects of his journey. He generally spent three weeks or a month at a time between the three congregations. His ministry was increasingly blessed; and the people were so partial to it, that they thought themselves additionally favoured while he was with them. Neither did the people at Wootton-under-Edge and Dursley less esteem his labours; with them he spent a fortnight together, thus dividing his time between these places and Rodborough, the latter for the last ten years of his life, the place of his residence.

Mr. Croom died at Christian Malford, on Friday, the 10th of October, 1780, where he had preached on the preceding Sunday. His lying a corpse on the Sabbath, upon the premises where he

had the preceding Sunday, in a very fervent manner, addressed the congregation, made it a very solemn day; and many tears were shed on the event. On the Tuesday following, his remains were conveyed very respectfully to the Tabernacle at Rodborough, accompanied by many friends, where they were interred by the Rev. Rowland Hill, after a suitable discourse preached to a numerous congregation.—Mr. Croom was tall—full six feet—and large featured, of a clear complexion, and dark eyes. His temper, though naturally morose, was well regulated by Divine grace. His constitution was rather inactive. Originally deficient in the use of the pen, he never cultivated the improvement of it, so that he was an exception to the original Methodists, who supported a large correspondence with each other; whereas he hardly ever exchanged a letter, or even committed to paper the breviate of any thing he delivered. Though he was very clear in the doctrines of grace, and in sentiment a strict Calvinist, he retained much of the manners, deportment, and language of the Quakers. He was of a satirical turn, but never indulged levity. He often smiled, but never laughed. He was held in great estimation by Lady Huntingdon and the leaders of Calvinistic Methodism in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. The means of his subsistence was always uncertain; but the God whom he served never left him nor forsook him. At his decease, Mr. Hill, who was ever the father of the friendless and the widow, exerted himself in behalf of Mrs. Croom, and a daughter deficient in her intellects, who received a stated subsistence from the Rodborough congregation while they lived.

In the spring of 1771, the Rev. Rowland Hill commenced preaching at Bristol and in the neighbourhood. He was introduced to the Tabernacle congregation by the Rev. Cornelius Winter, who bears testimony to the usefulness of his sermons, and considers having made his acquaintance as one of the greatest mercies in his life. “From the Sabbath (he says) on which I had the pleasure to introduce him to the Tabernacle pulpit, has religion been reviving through his instrumentality, and the flame has burned strong ever since. Other instruments may have helped, but it began with him.” He was at this time under the frowns of his family, disappointed of his admission into the Church, and distressed for money. No one treated him with more cordiality and friendship than Lady Huntingdon, who encouraged him to follow the commands of God, and look continually to his Divine Master for direction and assistance. Her house at Bath was his home at this time, and from thence he made frequent excursions into Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and other places, preaching everywhere with great power and success.

In the order of Divine Providence there is a strange combi-

nation of circumstances, by which what is appointed is brought to pass. In the same year died Mr. Whitefield, the Rev. Howel Davies, Rector of Prengast, near Haverfordwest, the head of Calvinistic Methodism in Pembrokeshire, and Mr. Adams, of Rodborough, the leader of the same cause in Gloucestershire and Wilts. Though the Tabernacle at Bristol was under Mr. Whitefield's auspices, yet, strange to say, in his will he made not the least mention of it. The trustees in London offered to befriend it, but would not accept it as a part of their charge. The two considerable men then depended on, were Messrs. Collet and Ireland. Preachers in that department were very scarce indeed, and had it not been for the assistance afforded by Lady Huntingdon, who sent several of her students to Bristol, the Tabernacle congregation would frequently have been entirely destitute of any supply. Pressing letters were sent to the Rev. Cornelius Winter, who had just then returned from America with Mr. Whitefield's will, and was serving at the Tabernacle in London. The letters were principally from Mr. Ireland and Mr. Hogg, who was also a leading man in the Bristol and Gloucestershire cause, and, by the death of Mr. Adams, became senior preacher in the Connexion. The latter was a grazier and butcher at Painswick. He was a person whose character for integrity was so thoroughly appreciated, that even the irreligious farmers in the neighbourhood often said to him in dealing—"Mr. Hogg, we know you will give us the value of our cattle; you are the best judge of the proper price; take them, and pay us what you think them worth." Never, in a single instance, did they regret their confidence in his honesty. Amidst all his eccentricities, his reputation was unblemished; and though not slothful in business, he was most fervent in spirit.

Mr. Hogg had some colleagues; Messrs. Hill, Croom, Vines, and Captain Joss—men of the same description with himself, and fit to draw in the same yoke, being of the same spirit—men whose lives were spent in the endeavour to rouse their listless neighbourhood to a sense of religion. This observation applies to each of them, namely, that from the purest motives they engaged in the work of Christ. What they did, therefore, they did heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men. They did not, like too many of the present day, recede from the work of God for fear of a flake of snow, a shower of rain, or an apprehension of taking cold from the inclemency of the weather; they were not accustomed to mistake a painted lion for a real one, nor scarcely were they to be intimidated had a real lion stood in their way.

As Mr. Hogg gained reputation, his sphere became greatly enlarged; it extended from Tewksbury in Gloucestershire to

Portsmouth, including many other places in different directions. The Tabernacle, in Bristol, was abundantly indebted to him for his services for several years. He frequently broke his nightly rest by rising at an unusually early hour, and travelling many miles, that he might appear before that congregation at seven o'clock in the morning; after which service, he used to visit the colliers at Kingswood, where he preached in the forenoon; and concluded the public exercises of the day by returning and preaching at the Tabernacle in the evening. He rendered that place essential service also, by procuring pecuniary assistance for its support. He had considerable influence with wealthy professors of different denominations in Bristol, who, in cases of emergency, would, on his application, encourage the cause by their contributions. During one of his visits to that city, he was invited to breakfast with Lady Huntingdon, who had just then removed to Clifton, accompanied by Mr. Shipman, whose labours in the Tabernacle connexion were most abundant. At her Ladyship's he was met by a large party of quality and several clergymen, among whom was the Rev. Martin Madan, of the Lock Chapel, near Hyde-Park-Corner, London. The Countess insisted upon Mr. Hogg's taking the lead in family worship, in which was included an exhortation. This service was received with evident marks of satisfaction. At this time, he engaged Mr. Madan to visit Painswick, and procured the church for him to preach in. Mr. Madan delivered a very memorable sermon from Zech. ix. 12; but the poor curate lost his curacy in consequence thereof. One sentence in that sermon was retained in the memory of an aged disciple, who died many years after: "I have long been accustomed to plead at the bar the cause of man; I stand here to plead the cause of God, and to beseech sinners to be reconciled to him."

The ministry of the Rev. Joseph Shipman, one of the six students who were ungenerously expelled the University of Oxford in 1768, for the crime of indulging themselves in social religious exercises, and endeavouring to disseminate the influence of religion among their fellow-collegians and the inhabitants of that city, was at this period singularly successful in Bristol, and vast numbers, who were afterwards ornaments to Christianity, acknowledged his ministry to have been the means of their conversion to God. He was remarkably faithful, both in his sermons and in his private and personal addresses. Apprised of the danger of deception, he used such endeavours to detect it, that if any perished under his ministry their blood must be upon their own head. Plymouth, the Dock, Bristol, Rodborough in Gloucestershire, and Haverfordwest in South Wales, were the places in which his faithful and assiduous

labours were principally employed. He had spent some time with Lady Huntingdon, and preached in several places here, and in other parts of the kingdom under her patronage, immediately after his expulsion from Oxford. He was most kindly received by her Ladyship at Trevecca; and, even when cast off by his own family, was taken in by this elect lady and mother in Israel, and supported entirely at her expense. His expulsion furnished his family with fresh arguments against him, and invigorated their endeavours to turn his mind from evermore thinking of the ministry. But all this availed nothing; he was persuaded a dispensation of the Gospel was committed to him, and therefore he conferred not with flesh and blood. Attended with a variety of trials he went forth preaching the Gospel, and though often dejected with a sight and sense of his own unworthiness, the success attending his endeavours proved he had not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. His zeal and earnestness soon carried him beyond his natural strength, for, after labouring six months, he was reduced so low as to be obliged to desist for a time, and scarcely had he recruited his strength, but he exhausted it again.

From Bristol, Mr. Shipman was sent to Haverfordwest by Lady Huntingdon. He had not been long there before he broke a blood-vessel, occasioned, as it was supposed, by his too much energy in preaching the day before. He never preached but once after this, when he intimated the views he had of his approaching dissolution; and the use he made of them, left a deep impression upon his hearers. It was with much difficulty his friends got him to Upton-upon-Severn. At the time of his return his mind was exceeding happy, and he employed the little strength he had in writing interesting letters to his friends, and the different societies with whom he was united in the indissoluble bonds of Christian affection.

Just at this juncture, the Rev. Cornelius Winter removed to Bristol, having been sent thither by Mr. Keen, one of Mr. Whitefield's principal trustees in London. His acquaintance with Mr. Shipman commenced from a very affecting letter he wrote the Bristol Society, who had partaken of his short labours in the decline of life. His Tabernacle friends were desirous to preserve a life from which much service might be expected. Mr. Winter wrote to him, requesting he would accept an invitation to the Hot-wells. His answer is dated May 31, 1771:—

“Dear Sir,—I should have answered your kind and truly Christian letter last post, but that I have been worse than ordinary these three days back, owing to my medicine taking a wrong and bad effect. To-day, through mercy, I am again revived. Surely no disorder is so flattering and apt to impose upon the patient with hopes of health as a decline. For although several symptoms attend me, which in all

probability must issue in the dissolution of the body, yet, would you believe it? at times I am ready to think there is but little danger. But a few hours, as a slight trial of my strength convinces me, I am a dying man. This makes me ready to wish my pains and weakness increased. But even this shall turn to my good through your prayers and the supply of the Spirit of Christ. I am much indebted to you for that brotherly love and real concern which you express for my better part. Indeed, Sir, such are the views I have of my own undeservings and ill-deservings, that I wonder any of the Lord's people regard, or take notice of me. But surely we have drank into the same spirit, and are invited to the same head. Ah! my dear brother, if I am worthy to stand in that relation to you, lift up your voice like a trumpet for God, while you have a voice to use for him. Excuse my freedom in endeavouring to animate you in your great work. Oh, what would I give to have the honour to be thus employed the few days I have to live! But we must suffer as well as do the will of God, and believe 'whatever is, is right.' I am very well able to see my dear friends, and hope to be refreshed by your and Mr. Hill's company on Tuesday, according to your proposal. The Lord be with you, Sir, and all our dear Bristol friends! Nothing gives me more solid delight, than the consideration that God's people remember such a poor fruitless creature as your humble servant, "JOSEPH SHIPMAN."

Mr. Hill and Mr. Winter, on the Tuesday referred to, rode to Upton, but found Mr. Shipman too weak to give them much of his company that evening. In the little conversation he held with them, he behaved and conversed as a dying man should do. The next morning they took him to Bristol in a chaise, but he was ill able to bear the journey. Mr. Winter had the care of him, and was his devoted companion at Clifton for five weeks, where he was witness to the Lord's gracious dealings with him. Several persons of rank hearing of him, and of his willingness to die, were desirous to see him. He gave them an opportunity, and talked very faithfully to them, and with great prudence and judgment. They frankly acknowledged the thought of dying had a very different effect upon them to what the immediate views of it had upon him; and were surprised to hear him say that any change that seemed to bring him back to life, threw a flatness upon him; whereas, a prospect of speedy dissolution afforded him satisfaction. They shewed him every mark of their kindness while they continued at the Wells, which was not long after they first saw him. Sir Charles Middleton, afterwards Lord Barham, was one of them. He came to the Tabernacle to hear Mr. Shipman's funeral sermon, which was preached by Mr. Winter. It was published and dedicated to Sir Charles, who surprised Mr. Winter with a present of ten guineas before leaving Clifton.

Finding the change of scene was of no other advantage to him than to gratify him with a sight of his friends, whom he

dearly loved, Mr. Shipman returned to Upton, where he found some withdrawment of his consolations, and he had much conflict with his spiritual enemies, which, together with his bodily pains, caused him to pass through wearisome nights and dark days indeed. Some months previous to this Lady Huntingdon had gone to Trevecca, but hearing of his return from Bristol, hopeless of any good from the waters, addressed to him the following kind consolatory letter :—

“ Wales, August 14, 1771.

“ Dear Shipman,—Hearing you was returned from Bristol hopeless of any good from those waters, I have wished to follow you with every expression of tender concern. I am not surprised at the different dispensation your heart seems under by your letter. That faith which is previous to the most sure faith, is ever luminous ; and it is reasonable it should be so, as by this the object of our firmest confidence is discovered, as that Rock established for the cause of all future hope, and it is a universal observation, that all the true illuminations of the Spirit (those, I mean, that accompany solid conversion of soul), have these provings, and that by the same Spirit, and which is evident from our Lord's first temptation, ‘ He was led of the Spirit ’ to be tried. I did believe this would be the case in its measure. Unbelief is proved by faith, and faith by unbelief ; such is the mystery of this new internal world, when manifested in its reality to the soul ; and though it feels painful to suffer the loss of that light and love, yet let us remember the Author and Giver of this new existence must leave proof with us of his own faithfulness, as well as constant freedom of love, and that by that obscurity more and more fresh light may arise out of it, to testify of those riches that are hid in Christ Jesus. O ! dear Shipman, keep this point in the darkest hour. He died : what such love could do I will venture all with. This truth the great enemy of our souls can never attack, as that fact the Lord himself abides by, ‘ though we believe not he cannot deny himself ; ’ the various frames an oppressed and mortal body feels, with these painful sensations accompanying a gradual decay of strength, bear down through infirmity all supports but those immediately given or more secretly maintained by that loving Friend of ours, and whose point is to make us what he knows will most effectually prepare us, and that for ever, to enjoy those various bounties his precious blood has paid for. To take thus all we meet makes all, all those little or light afflictions for a moment as so many means of humbling us under his gracious and mighty hand, by feeling the truth of that irresistible sensation of soul, viz., all is mercy, and all must only be pure mercy for me. Here weakness revives ; here faith triumphs ; here love conquers ; and here pure and heavenly hope reposes as on the beloved bosom of Jesus. To this point, therefore, dear Shipman, may your simple honest heart be brought ; here, and only here, have we for ever done with ourselves. O ! it is a great lesson : this ever only brings us to Jesus, and this can only keep us there. It is here we lose our filthy garments of self-righteousness, here we lose the pride of all attainments, spiritual or natural, and then our prison is turned into a heavenly palace, and earth into a paradise ready to translate us int

his kingdom of glory. The ever unceasing song of praise begins when we lose sight of all things but the sufficiency of that offering for sinners, and that all remains for us still in the same heart of love that made it. May patience, then, have its perfect work in you, and that till the Lord alone may be so exalted in your heart and mind, that he may say, 'Here is my resting place : here will I dwell, for thus saith the Lord.' Let us, dear Shipman, be willing he should have his way in and with our hearts ; he has a great deal to take from us to make room for such an inmate, and while we resist our pain is great, but yielding all up decides the point with him, and it is desperate faith only can do this ; and it is so ordered that desperate faith ever finds sufficient mercy, and that for a sufficiency of glory to all eternity. Rest then your poor weary heart in safety upon his faithfulness, and the misery committed as his care more than your own, and ere long he shall deserve that voice of praise from you for ever, 'Worthy is the Lamb.' How shall I be able to express that tender regard which can only supply all my prayers for you ? These are poor and dead offerings, but so far as the blessed Intercessor makes a part in them, so only such as I have taken with the warmth of a friend, love of a Christian, and the maternal tenderness of her who is ever, dear Shipman, your affectionate friend,

"S. HUNTINGDON."

Three months after her Ladyship's affectionate communication was sent, the heart it was designed to cheer found relief from all its sorrows in that land of pure exalted bliss, where

"Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain !"

Although his extreme weakness of body was attended by distress of mind, yet he still preserved an unshaken faith, with much confidence in God ; and although considerably abridged of his comforts, they did at times so refresh his soul, that, a little before his departure, he said to a friend, "If I had but breath to speak, I could tell you wonders." About fourteen days before he died, another blood-vessel broke ; it discharged moderately, till on his being seized with a cough, in an instant the blood came up so profusely, that every one present supposed he would be suffocated. His body was thrown into violent tremblings, and his mind into the utmost confusion. He exclaimed, "Surely I am like a wild bull in a net !" But a calm soon succeeded this storm, and seeing his friends much affected, he said, "Don't weep. *God is with me, God is with me ; I am upon a sure foundation—I am going to heaven.*" He lived a few days longer, pining and mourning for the hour of his deliverance. On the 31st of October, having only time given him to lift up his hands and eyes to heaven, he gained admittance into the state which he so much desired.

The Tabernacle at Bristol continuing to be remarkably well attended, Lady Huntingdon was induced to think of opening

another chapel at the other end of the city. On looking round, she was directed to a building which had been used as an assembly-room, and was at that time engaged for an occasional theatre. The proprietor let it to her Ladyship on lease at 40*l.* per annum, subject to all repairs, and she employed, it is supposed, nearly 800*l.* in rendering it suitable for Divine worship. It was opened in the month of August, 1775, by Dr. Peckwell and Mr. Glascott. Other ministers were present, and took part in the services of the day, which proved a day of joy and gladness to many hearts. The pulpit was supplied by clergymen of the Church of England for about ten years; and there Messrs. Shirley, Venn, Haweis, Piercy, Wills, Pentycross, Rowland, Davies, Jones, Sheppard, and others, sounded the Gospel trumpet to overflowing congregations: some of the most distinguished families in the kingdom, during their visits to Clifton and the neighbourhood, went to worship there;—the Spirit of God was eminently poured forth upon preachers and upon hearers; the conversion of souls was frequent, and in some instances singularly striking; meetings for prayer were remarkable, especially in the afternoon of the Lord's-day, when hundreds came together with one heart to besiege the throne of grace, and draw the blessings of heaven down; pious persons from various congregations in the city and the country around felt it a privilege to attend, and often realized refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord.

In the year 1782 some unpleasant circumstances arose relative to the chapel at Bristol, partly occasioned by the conduct of the Rev. Mr. Owen, a clergyman who had been some time engaged in preaching at different places under her Ladyship's patronage.*

Several attempts were made during the Countess's life to

* Letter from Lady Huntingdon to Mr. Evans:—

“ College, March 16, 1782.

“ Dear Sir,—You must merit my most faithful regard, or I should ill appear to myself for such repeated ways of troubling you. My sense of your kindness as belonging to Mr. Owen being first connected with us, obliges me to request this further instance of making out his account, against his time is up. I send you his letter. His second year is up the 28th of April, and a little circumstance that I thought you ought to be apprised of, though by me little regarded, but this for the sake of my old and principal friend, one of the most worthy men living, and above any mean or unfaithful conduct to any creature upon earth. Mr. Owen having mentioned the ill usage he met with at Brighton (in that letter I send you of his), did not a little surprise me, and though it had not the greatest credit with me, I wrote to Mr. Scutt without hinting any thing of his (Mr. Owen's), and was surprised that he received but fifty shillings from the people. This truth I wanted to be informed of without stirring up strife on either side, and you have an exact copy of Mr. Scutt's answer to me, and is as follows:—‘ Mr. Owen, I should suppose, must mean that he had not fifty shillings after he left the Connexion, for I gave him five guineas upon his leaving

obtain a new chapel, but from various causes they failed; in more than one instance, money to a considerable amount was raised, but was afterwards returned to the contributors, or, with their consent, devoted to some other purpose. After her Ladyship's death, the cause suffered material diminution; but the managers were not left without tokens of the Divine favour, and good was effected by the preaching of the Word. On the Rev. William Cooper's visiting Bristol, fresh vigour was infused; the attendance on the means of grace was very great, the chapel was found far too small for the persons wishing accommodation, and he frequently preached from the window to a much larger number outside than within. The Lord gave testimony to the word of life, and many were brought, through his instrumentality, to a saving knowledge of the truth: he proffered his services to the committee of management in relation to a larger and more suitable building, but it was not accepted, and nothing was done. The pulpit was regularly supplied by ministers in the Connexion with acceptance, and with various degrees of success; the labours of some now living, and of others who have fallen asleep in Jesus, are still remembered with satisfaction and gratitude.

In 1820-1 a fresh effort was made to erect a new chapel, when 800*l.* were collected and expended in the purchase of a piece of land and buildings, which site was afterwards deemed ineligible; it was therefore disposed of, the proceeds vested in government securities, and a deed executed, placing it in the

us, and while here was boarded, and even the very postage of his letters paid without expense to him.' He was in my own house, and most kindly treated; and the only minister that ever made a single complaint for pay or any one thing. This I am obliged to say for the credit of my committee friends there, and which is but due to their fidelity and generous conduct on all occasions. I really wish poor Owen well, but his excessive pride will ruin both his ministry and character. I know that you will take no notice *as from me*, as I have not yielded to these reproaches, as wishing to part in peace and love with him, and so not have him hurt by any thing arising from the people towards him; and as it is ever easier to keep peace than to make it after it is broken. By this you will be able to settle matters clearly with him till the 28th of April for this last year, with a note sent him of 25*l.*—and what Bristol gives, that the balance due may be paid by me by that time. Be so good to let me have the names of our friends that mean to abide with us, that a letter of attorney may be made out for their security; and believe me, dear Sir, your faithfully obliged friend,

" S. HUNTINGDON.

" P. S. It does appear Mr. Owen has said, 'he left the Connexion on account of my having pressed him to secede.' Nothing can be a more unjust or cruel lie, as I never once named it; and, between ourselves, had he ever offered, I must have made an excuse, as his ministry settled among us does by no means admit of it, as the great shortness found by us in it. Had he continued to preach as *he now does*, and as wishing him well, had he not sought to leave, I, through tenderness, would have continued him; and to me his behaviour was proper and peaceable, and ever ready to execute the wants and wishes of the people when called for. I wish you to have this great untruth contradicted before he leaves, and the greatest justice and most honourable conduct proved to him from me by every means. Please to return his letters."

hands of the trustees of the Connexion, to be employed by them in the erection of a chapel in Bristol when opportunity should offer.

In 1823 the Rev. William Lucy became the resident minister, and the lease of the chapel expiring in the autumn of the following year, the propriety of immediately commencing a new one was strenuously urged by many, but it was thought prudent to take another short lease of seven years, towards the close of which several members of the congregation, after almost incredible difficulty, became possessed of the spot in Lodge-street, on which the new chapel now stands, and proceeded to its erection. The dimensions of the building are sixty-two feet ten inches by fifty-two feet nine inches, within the walls, exclusive of a recess sufficiently large to admit the pulpit and desks: it is of the Gothic order, and is built with stone, faced in two sides with freestone; it was opened for Divine worship in August 1831, one month only before resigning the old chapel, on which occasion the Rev. John Brown, of Cheltenham, preached in the morning, and the Rev. James Sherman, now of Surrey chapel, in the evening. The expenses incurred, including excellent school-rooms underneath one-half of the chapel, and a crypt underneath the other half, together with a commodious vestry, was upwards of 4,500*l*. The chapel is computed to accommodate between eleven and twelve hundred persons. The additions to the congregation have been very encouraging since the opening of this place of worship; the number of communicants has considerably increased, and there is reason to hope that good has been effected through the preaching of the Word.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Lady Huntingdon's Chapel at Reading—Mr. Talbot—Letter from Mr. Venn—Mr. Hallward—Death of Mr. Talbot—Mr. Cadogan—Mrs. Talbot—Sir Richard Hill—Mr. Hallward and Lady Huntingdon—Letter from Lady Huntingdon to Mr. Hallward—Mr. Cadogan's preaching—Lady Huntingdon's Chapel opened—Mr. Piercy—Letter from Lady Huntingdon to the Managers—Mr. Gurdon—Mr. Cadogan's Conversion—Lady Huntingdon's Letter to Mr. Cadogan—Mr. Hallward—Death of Mr. Cadogan—Chapel opened by Mr. Rowland Hill and Mr. Eyre—Mr. Sherman.

IN tracing the history of Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Reading, it will be necessary to revert to some preceding circumstances relative to the first introduction of the Gospel into that town.

About the year 1767 the Rev. William Talbot, LL.D.,

Vicar of Kineton, in Warwickshire, was presented to the vacant living of St. Giles's, Reading, by Lord Camden, then Lord Chancellor, it being one of the best livings in the gift of the Crown. Mr. Talbot was an extraordinary man, both for piety and generosity; and Mrs. Talbot also was a Christian of more than common excellence. While he resided at Kineton, he frequently made excursions to various parts of the kingdom, where he proclaimed to numerous congregations the glad tidings of the gospel. Being a ready and pathetic speaker, he was every where heard with attention. The opposition he met with did not in the least disconcert him, but he persevered in his work, and had the satisfaction of seeing his labours blessed. As early as the year 1757, we find him itinerating for Lady Huntingdon, in Northamptonshire, accompanied by Mr. Madan. "I had, not long ago (says Mr. Hervey), the favour of a visit from your worthy neighbour, Mr. Talbot. He came, accompanied by Mr. Madan; and both were like men baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire—fervent in spirit, and setting their faces as a flint."* When her Ladyship was afterwards induced to enlarge the sphere of her labours, and erect and open chapels at Brighton, Bath, and other places, for the preaching of the pure gospel of the grace of God, she sought the assistance of those ministers of the Established Church who bore a faithful and honourable testimony to the grace and atonement of the Redeemer. With Messrs. Whitefield, Romaine, Venn, Madan, Howel Davies, Daniel Rowlands, and other faithful witnesses for God, Mr. Talbot was united in sounding the gospel trumpet in these highly favoured places. The grand motive which induced Mr. Talbot to leave a people where he was so generally respected and beloved, was the hope of more extensive usefulness; and in this he was not disappointed. He who had blessed his ministry at Kineton to the saving conversion of many, had still more abundant blessings in reserve for the inhabitants of Reading. Immediately on his removal thither, his excellent friend, Mr. Venn, addressed the following letter to him, which deserves to be rescued from oblivion:—

"My dear Friend,—The love which sprung up in my heart towards you, when we first met at Ludbury, has not waxed cold. No sooner, therefore, did I hear of your providential removal to another and larger flock, than my heart was engaged in prayer; and I now sit down on purpose to send you some account of the things which I ask of my God in your behalf. In the first place, I beg of him to enable you to preach Jesus Christ, in the glory of his person, in the fulness of his grace, and

* Letter to the Rev. John Ryland, then minister at Warwick, afterwards at Northampton, father of the late Rev. Dr. Ryland, of Bristol.

in the length, breadth, height, and depth of his love ; to preach him as a free, present, Almighty Saviour of the sinful sons of men ; to preach him with increasing clearness ; and to this end, I pray that you may have more precious discoveries of your own salvation in him, that you may speak as the apostles did, from a rich experience of the reality of the blessedness of believing in Jesus. Secondly, I beg of God, that in the discharge of your office, you may exert yourself—not to injure your valuable health ; but, as far as your strength will hold, to go on, imitating the great Shepherd himself, who, from his incessant labours, was taken for fifty, when little more than thirty—his very countenance was aged. Thirdly, I pray that you may be filled with bowels of mercies ; that not only the counsels you give, and the consolations you administer to the faithful, but even all your denunciations of truth to come, may breathe a tender love to the souls of men. Fourthly, I pray that you may be bold as a lion to encounter reproach, and to bear all revilings, yea, and be willing to be a monitor unto many for His sake, whom the nations abhorred. Fifthly, I pray that you may serve God with all humility and many tears, feeling the plague of your own heart, and yourself to be the chief of sinners ; for then the Spirit of God rests upon us, and our fellow-sinners are melted down. Sixthly, I pray that all the discouragements you may meet with, all the opposition from your own people speaking perverse things, and all the various trials you are to meet with in your new station, may be more than counter-balanced, by finding the word of the Lord in your mouth, mighty to convince and to convert ; by seeing seals added to your ministry, and precious souls your epistle of commendation, known and read of all men. Finally, my prayer to God for you, and for myself is, that our death may crown our ministry ; that we may with our latest breath so testify of Christ, that we may add fresh weight to every discourse we have once made to our people in defence of the gospel. These petitions I have, and I trust I shall often, put up for my dear friend. Having almost lost my voice, and returning from the rank of standard-bearer in the camp of Israel to that of a private soldier, I have abundantly more time to pray for my dear companions with whom I was once a fellow-labourer in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ ; and though his all-wise appointment has fixed us in such distant parts of the vineyard, that probably we shall seldom meet here, it is in this case no small gratification to Christian love, that our meeting never to part cannot be far off ; we shall both appear among the *brands plucked out of the fire* ; both be numbered amongst those who have turned sinners from the errors of their ways, and been witnesses for a crucified God in a day of rebuke and blasphemy : that meeting I reckon much upon ; I want to have it vastly more realized to my mind ; I want to shout for joy, uttering the heathen celebrated saying with the faith of assurance, ‘O ! præclaram illam diem.’ Yours, &c. “H. VENN.”

At Reading, Mr. Talbot enjoyed a general esteem, and received every mark of respect even from those who differed widely from him in opinion. The Rev. John Hallward (since Vicar of Assingdon, in Suffolk), was his curate, having been ordained

from Oxford, and licensed upon this title. He was a man of the same spirit as the vicar, and, like him, lived in the hearts of a numerous people. Mr. Talbot's labours were extensively blessed in the awakening of sinners; and it is supposed that in the few years that he exercised his ministry at Reading, he had between two and three hundred seals, such as shall be his crown of rejoicing in that day when the chief Shepherd shall appear. But so mysterious are the ways of God, and so unfathomable his designs, that, in the prime of life, and in the midst of usefulness, this faithful and successful servant of Christ was removed from this world.

Mr. Talbot had not long left Reading on a visit to his intimate friend, Lord Dartmouth, when tidings reached Mrs. Talbot of his being ill of a putrid fever, which, it is supposed, was contracted before he left home, by attendance on a person who lay ill of that contagious disease. Many of his congregation had fixed a day to implore the Almighty for a continuance of his useful life; but before the day came, he was called to eternal rest. His illness was of a short duration, and he left this scene of mortality, for a life of immortal happiness, on the 2nd of March, 1774, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, at the house of his intimate friend, the late Mr. Wilberforce, uncle to the late worthy member of Parliament, of the same name.

The melancholy news of Mr. Talbot's death soon reached Reading, and deeply affected his congregation. It was vain to entertain the hope of procuring the living for his worthy curate, Mr. Hallward, or any other clergyman of his sentiments. Numerous applications were made for the living to the then Lord Chancellor, who unexpectedly conferred it on the Rev. William Bromley Cadogan. He was not then ordained, and it was more than a twelvemonth before he was capable of holding it. The people heard of the appointment with grief, but there was no remedy. Their only hope was, that the new vicar, being a young gentleman of noble family, would feel no disposition to do the duties himself, and that Mr. Hallward might be continued in the curacy. Under the sequestration occasioned by Mr. Cadogan's minority, Mr. Hallward was continued in the curacy by the churchwardens, and ordained priest during that period upon the same title, which was readily accepted by the Bishop.*

Succeeding such a man as Mr. Talbot, who possessed so

* Not long after the death of Mr. Talbot, Mr. Hallward preached a discourse on Titus iii. 8, at the annual commemoration of Mr. West's charity; but for particular reasons, its publication was deferred till the month of November. The sermon was entitled "The doctrine of Faith and Good Works stated and considered," and contains a very necessary, useful, and scriptural vindication of the great doctrine of justification by faith from the charge of licentiousness and morality, and points out the true nature and place of good works; nor is it the

much integrity, zeal, and general knowledge of Christianity, it might naturally be expected that Mr. Cadogan would feel himself peculiarly happy in retaining a curate who was at once so beloved by the people, so useful in his ministry, and of so unblemished a reputation. With a view of continuing Mr. Hallward in the curacy, a petition was drawn up by the most serious inhabitants of the place, and, being signed by a number of the parishioners, was presented to Mr. Cadogan in the year 1775, when he first came to the living. He threw the petition into the fire, and declared he would not comply with it, had it been signed by every individual in the parish; and that Mr. Hallward should never preach in his pulpit again upon any consideration.

During the interval which occurred from the death of Mr. Talbot and the induction of Mr. Cadogan to the living of St. Giles's, Lady Huntingdon paid a visit to her afflicted friend, Mrs. Talbot, at Reading. At that time various conversations took place between those excellent women and Mr. Hallward, as to the best means of providing for the spiritual wants of the congregation, in the event of Mr. Hallward's being dismissed from his curacy. When the petition of the parishioners was rejected by the new vicar, Mr. Hallward made immediate application to Lady Huntingdon for assistance. We subjoin the reply of the venerable Countess, which is dated Bath, April 27, 1775 :—

“Dear Sir,—I was much obliged by your kind letter, and you may depend on my yielding every service in my power to the Lord's people at Reading, who are so near your heart. Our conversation, you may remember, led (without design) to those means that did appear immediately calculated for the most extensive usefulness in the various services of the Gospel, and in consequence brought out *verbally* what my practice for so many years had proved so positively. I am persuaded that the wisdom from above is as free from partiality as it is from hypocrisy; and for this reason, our fears relative to either ought to be as much indulged as in any other apparent contradiction to the word of God, in the most solid experiences of an humble mind. The present Reformation has been owned by the Lord under the general idea of *irregularity*; but I humbly think his orders are more regularly

least part of its excellency that it was prefaced with a very respectful testimony to the memory and character of the excellent Mr. Talbot. In about a month after it was published, both the sermon and its author were very severely and illiberally attacked by an anonymous writer in the “Reading Mercury.” The writer proved to be the Rev. Mr. Wainhouse, formerly Curate of St. Giles's, in which church the sermon was delivered, who was very soon attacked by the late Richard Hill, Esq. afterwards Sir Richard Hill, Bart., in a well-written pamphlet, entitled “*Pietas Readingensis; or, a Vindication of the Rev. John Hallward's Sermon, in a series of Letters to the Rev. William Wainhouse, in answer to his publication in the 'Reading Mercury.'*” Those who are acquainted with Sir Richard Hill's style may imagine what a pitiable figure the quondam Curate of St. Giles's makes in the hands of such a masterly writer.

observed by this conduct than by any other means. You must allow me, dear Sir, the freedom this great subject obliges me to. The express word of God orders and directs his servants, as messengers of peace to the whole world; and they are either under the necessity of obeying, or they are not. If he has not the authority of even an earthly master to engage the obedience, place, and time of his servants, his precepts must be vain, and, of course, every degree of their obedience vain also; but we, as wretched bond-slaves, redeemed, by a love stronger than death, to liberty and life, seem to have no conditions to make in the service of such a friend; and any composition for body, soul, or spirit, must imply an insensibility of the purchased blessing, or the debt from us for ever due to such a heavenly purchaser. This, to each individual, seems the state of our case. What shall we say, then, when still further favoured, as ministers, not only to *know this* for their own everlasting comfort, but are also honoured by a commission to declare such glad tidings of rich, free, covenanted mercy to every creature? Should thousands attempt to restrain such by any supposed power, found inferior to that which they have received, in order to make them hold their peace, we venture to circumscribe their commission. Alas! where is their appeal to be made? Never, but with perpetual shame to Him who gave the authority. Allow me to say, churches of all sorts, more or less, move as the Jerusalem of old. 'O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! THOU that killest the prophets that are sent unto us,' &c. The fire of zeal kindled upon the altar is artfully smothered by the base and interested reasonings of flesh and blood; and I do desire to make my appeal to any honest heart, touched by the love and power of our Saviour's grace, if the best moments of their soul were not when all was lost to them, but that unreserved sacrifice they were then able to make of themselves to him for ever? The losing the animating sensation this produces does not make it less excellent in practice; O no! nor less satisfactory to a heart where that pure and heavenly impression is felt, though ever so faint in its traces, and which yet, from weak though certain dispositions, retains the inestimable privilege of its great object of desire. You must allow me every sincerity for the contempt I feel for any or every reserve in my own wretched heart, and which begets the just impatience I own against myself, as well as the littleness and meanness of all that can be done by me for such a faithful, suffering, and eternal friend. It is from so believing I thus speak. He claims me to the ends of the earth, and every breath to suffer for him; and there is, I do know (from experience), more cowardice than humble fear or real conscience in every retreat we make. Simple, child-like obedience, while the heart is led by the Spirit of God, and consistently disposed and united with the precepts, never can, or ever did, essentially err, as the tenderest protection is ever in the Lord's hands for such, while cold and lukewarm spirits, and the enthusiasm of false fire kindled by nature's pride, have alike been the reproach of Christ's Church in the world. My point is, I fairly own, for myself a universal devotedness through all, and such as would make me, by disposition, and not by plausible appearances, the honest and simple disciple of Jesus Christ; neither formality nor legal bondages having any part of my care, but the pure truth, according to the Bible, verified and under-

stood, by being actually possessed and experienced, and as by this only God is most glorified. When this becomes the real state of the heart, whether in the Church or out of it, is no material matter; and may your heart and mind, my dear Sir, be ever thus the ready servant of Jesus Christ, and then all men's sentiments (as such) will be as the tow that held Sampson. The superior strength will soon burst such cords asunder.

"Did I not believe that you mean all I say, I would not have taken this liberty, therefore cannot beg pardon for exposing thus much, what is so far above the little disputes that ceremonies of any kind claim from us. A true conversion of the soul to God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, is in no want how to pay the tithe of mint, annise, and cummin, when the weightier matters are the point for all their views. Without this, I would for ever be silent on religion; in my esteem, it brings all things to a sensible moral mind, or worse than nothing in any other. In this light you must but judge the importance I see for every possible sacrifice being joyfully made by Christians once fully convinced of what they are about. Rational influence or divine we must be under; the former makes but a Pagan, the latter only a Christian.

"I here must end, with shame for this long letter. It was begun soon after I had the great pleasure of receiving yours; but repeated returns of my illness must make the excuse of any delays that may make me suspected of want of inclination or true respect to you, which I would hope from the disposition of my heart will never be wanting to you. May the Lord Jesus Christ for ever bless you, direct and comfort you in all the future narrow road real grace does ever lead in; and when remembering before the Lord a sinful world, and a back-sliding church, forget not her who can only claim rank in the wretched condition of both these, but who must ever remain, dear Sir, your obliged and ever faithful friend,

"S. HUNTINGDON.

"Clifton Hill, May 18th, 1775.

"P.S.—I began this letter at Bath, but have been at this place about a fortnight, for the recovery of my health, and am gaining ground of my complaint through the blessing of God, the air, and the judicious care of Dr. Ludlow, of Bristol. I must entreat my kind and Christian respects to dear Mr. and Mrs. Stillingfleet, to which Lady Anne Erskine (now with me) desires hers may be united. I have this moment heard you are with Mrs. Talbot, to whom I beg my Christian love."

On Mr. Cadogan's taking possession of his living, in the beginning of the year 1775, the congregation repeatedly heard him with candour, but were grieved at not finding those sacred truths which they valued more than life itself. Mr. Talbot's congregation soon dispersed. It would be the foolishness of folly to suppose that those who have ever experimentally been taught the truth as it is in Jesus, and tasted indeed that the Lord is gracious, would be confined to the walls of a parish church, when *Ichabod* is written upon them; and neither the same gospel

preached, nor the same exemplary conduct or zeal and labour pursued by the successor. Many naturally repaired to those places where the gospel was preached in their vicinity, where they could hear to edification; others, not satisfied with the new doctrines preached by the vicar, nor the form and discipline of the dissenting meetings, applied to the Countess of Huntingdon, and, having taken a place which would contain several hundred people, opened it as a chapel according to the forms of the Established Church, where they might worship God in their customary way, and sit again under the refreshing sound of Jesus Christ and his salvation.

Had Mr. Cadogan been indifferent to all religion, he might have been less violent in his manner of dismissing Mr. Hallward; but he was a Pharisee; his zeal was great, but not according to knowledge. He thought he did God service by manifesting displeasure at those who sought salvation by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law; hence arose his enmity to Lady Huntingdon and the ministers who laboured for her at Reading. But good Mrs. Talbot incurred his deepest resentment. She considered it her duty not to remove from the spot where her husband's labours had been so signally blessed, and to comfort and strengthen the numerous young converts who daily flocked to her for instruction. Like a true mother in Israel, her house was opened for religious exercise; Lady Huntingdon's chaplains, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Shirley, and Mr. Glascott, united with Mr. Newton, Mr. Venn, Mr. Hill, and other ministers who visited her, in expounding the Scriptures to the people; and prayer was continually offered up under her roof for the conversion of Mr. Cadogan.

Highly offended at such conduct, he vehemently remonstrated. Various letters passed: but to all his bitter reproaches she returned answers so full of meekness and wisdom, that at length he fell at the feet of accumulated kindness, humbled and subdued, and to the last moments of his life confessed to the praise and glory of God, that Mrs. Talbot's letters and example were the principal means of leading him to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Light and power are distinct things. So difficult was it for an aspiring man, like Mr. Cadogan, whose father was Master of the Mint, in high favour at Court, and connected with the leading men in power, to renounce all hopes of preferment and take up his cross and follow the Lord Jesus Christ, that he was not able to come out boldly and preach the gospel for more than two years after he knew it. This is the more remarkable, because, while he retained his pharisaic notions, his courage

was undaunted, and he actually endured persecution for the methods he took to enforce the observance of moral duties.

For some years after the opening of Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Reading, it was supplied by the most popular ministers in the Connexion. Dr. Haweis, Mr. Wills, Mr. Glascott, Dr. Peckwell, Mr. Piercy, Mr. Coughlan, Mr. Maxfield, Mr. Taylor, and other clergymen, laboured there with distinguished success. Several of the students also, some of whom were afterwards in orders in the Established Church, such as Morrer, Jones, Winkworth, Newell, French, and others, supplied Reading in rotation, with Mr. English (of Woburn), Mr. Parsons (of Leeds), Mr. Meller, and others of like zeal and abilities.

In the summer of 1781, Reading was visited by Mr. Piercy, who had been sent out under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, with three other clergymen, Messrs. Wills, Glascott, and Taylor, to preach through the towns and villages in different parts of the kingdom: an interesting account of which was published in a series of letters addressed to Lady Huntingdon, with a preface by Mr. Pentycross, rector of St. Mary's, Wallingford. On the 4th of August Mr. Piercy arrived at Reading, and the next day being the Sabbath, he preached in her Ladyship's chapel from Luke xii. 32—"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Here Mr. Piercy had many opportunities of witnessing the most satisfactory evidences of the sincere devotion of that congregation to the Saviour whom they loved.

"Though small (says he), it is the most lively, simple, and affectionate congregation I have long seen—my very soul was charmed and delighted with the sight of so many melted hearts and weeping eyes. Surely, the Lord has much, very much work, from these appearances, to do in this place!"

After the morning service the congregation met again at half-past two for exhortation and for receiving the sacrament. In the evening, at six, Mr. Piercy preached again to a very crowded auditory, when he addressed himself more particularly to the unconverted. Deep solemnity and attention appeared on every countenance, and there is reason to hope that the seed sown in the name of the Lord was productive of much fruit, which has already, and will the more in eternity be to his praise and glory.

Towards the close of the year 1781, these pleasing prospects were for a season clouded. Some discontent arose in the congregation relative to a choice of a minister, and a wish was expressed, on the part of some of the members, to be organized on the plan of a Dissenting church. These matters were at first hinted to Lady Huntingdon, and at length announced in a

communication from Mr. Cockle and Mr. Warrey, two of the managers of the chapel. In her Ladyship's reply, she says:—

“The evident discontents that appear from every student sent to Reading, while those elsewhere are so kindly and gladly received, must make me suppose you have views of other ministers, or to have your congregation reduced to a mere *Dissenting church*; and this I have heard one of you have said more than once. Should this be your *real meaning*, your establishment for such a minister you certainly may have for sixty or seventy pounds a year; but indeed your advantages for the succeeding clergymen I have laboured to maintain for your service, are more than any other congregation (except the great chapels) ever have: your dissatisfactions ought to be fully explained, since it is our duty to supply as faithfully and advantageously to *all* impartially as we can; however you feel others are humble and thankful for what I am able to do for them. Your congregation ought to be informed of your objections, and if it be the wish of the people that we should withdraw (after our most disinterested services amongst you), I can have no objection. “The land is before us; and many call who would gladly eat of the crumbs (and would abundantly praise God) that fall from your table. You want nothing but summer season; but true life will never be kept up to prepare for spring and harvest, except by the roots taking strength downward in a winter season, and the most fruit will be found thus only upwards. I shall order my student, Meller, to leave for my chapel at Worcester, and appoint another for you, unless you choose elsewhere. We have no desire of any continuance but where the Lord does appear to prosper us; and should the souls of Reading find better care or more faithful services (as I have nothing in view for any but their spiritual blessedness), so we will turn to our other calls, wishing you every success and prosperity by whomsoever the true and living word is disinterestedly preached unto you. Parsons is now exceedingly blessed at Weymouth, and in Wiltshire was much owned of God. I know of none sent to you that have not been made eminently useful; so that I must believe all objections arise from resolutions of *settling down into a dry, formal body*, and these we cannot attend to, as spending our strength for nought; and the majority of our best ministers will not see needful for them to labour thus, while thousands are crying aloud for the gospel. We are able fully to answer by sufficient supplies, and you engross one student for one congregation, and nothing but repeated discontents follow to all that are sent. This is a bad sign for Reading; but the Lord must give us the just satisfaction to find that souls have been gathered, and I trust will acknowledge in the great day our faithful and disinterested services have not been in vain in the Lord. I am, Mr. Cockle and Mr. Warrey, ever your sincere friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

“College, Nov. 30, 1781.”

The Rev. Philip Gurdon was at this period curate of Cookham, in Berkshire, and his evangelical ministry was eminently useful in that neighbourhood. One day preaching near Reading, he was attended, amongst others, by Mr. Baylis, a worthy and

pious man, who had been clerk to Mr. Talbot, and was still in the same office under Mr. Cadogan. The next day he was accosted by Mr. Cadogan, the new vicar, before he had come to the knowledge of the truth:—

“Mr. Baylis, if you expect to remain clerk in my church, you must cease to make one of a mob who run after preachers of a certain description, like Mr. Gurdon.”—“Indeed, Sir (replied Mr. Baylis), I know not of any *mob*; a few of us, who had received benefit from Mr. Gurdon’s ministry in your church, during Mr. Talbot’s life, were glad to hear him preach when he came so near us, and had no apprehension of giving you offence.”—“Mr. Baylis, I utterly disapprove of this step; if I myself were to throw about my arms, and make a great noise, I could be popular too.”

Thus men will talk, till they are further instructed; and absurdly resolve all the faithful and fervent efforts of a sound, solid, and evangelical minister, like Mr. Gurdon, into noise, gesticulation, or something worse. Prejudice having jaundiced their minds, they are ready to believe every thing but the truth; like an old papist we have somewhere read of, who standing among the hearers of the celebrated Protestant Reformer Junius, crept towards him with an anxious countenance, and drew aside his gown. “What is the matter, friend?” said Junius. “Nothing, nothing,” replied he; “I am now satisfied; but *I heard that you had a cloven foot.*” Mr. Cadogan was glad, however, afterwards, to have Mr. Gurdon’s valuable services in the pulpit of St. Giles’s; and better knew how to estimate, as well as to describe, the expression of his zeal.*

Mr. Cadogan now boldly commenced his useful and honourable course, under many favourable circumstances of experience and knowledge. For, having previously written about *three hundred sermons*, with the help of no other book than his Bible before him, and his Concordance by his side, he soon became a good textuary and an accurate speaker. But, from this period, he made no use whatever of these discourses: he deemed a written sermon brought into the pulpit, unprofitable lumber at best, or proof of timidity or weakness, if not a mean artifice to avoid the reproach of Christ by a compliance with a shame-

* Mr. Gurdon’s ministry at Cookham church was blessed to the conversion of many; and to one in particular, the late Mrs. Poulton, who afterwards joined herself in communion with the society at Lady Huntingdon’s chapel, at Reading, which was then in the Butts; and both she and her husband, also a member, walked as became the gospel of Christ. They afterwards resided at Maidenhead, and were consistent members of the congregation belonging to Lady Huntingdon’s chapel there to their dying days. Mrs. Poulton was “an old disciple,” for she had the privilege and happiness of walking with God in this world during the long period of sixty years. She died January 18th, 1826, in the 77th year of her age.

ful innovation, introduced by certain popular ministers who preached against the Government in the time of the civil wars, tolerated by the people for political reasons, and which, though prohibited by the University statute, at the request of Charles II., gradually increased till it became a general custom.

Following the example of St. Paul, he soon joined himself to the people of God, and sought an intimacy with those ministers of the Gospel who were most distinguished for their fidelity. He disdained the crooked carnal policy of standing aloof from all serious characters, especially if they are poor, as though to be classed with the humble followers of the Lamb would be a disgrace. Nor did he dare attempt to keep back or soften the offensive parts of the word of God, under the specious pretence of keeping off prejudice, by introducing light gradually among his hearers. Had he, indeed, acted upon this plan, so repugnant to the practice of the apostles, and so disgraceful to the ministerial character, he might have kept on good terms with some of the wealthy and pharisaic of his flock; he might have preserved the friendship and interest of his noble relations and connexions; he might have become prebendary and dean; and, about the time of his departure to another world, he might have been placed on the list for a vacant see; but then, it is probably his preaching would never have been so much blessed as it was in turning many to righteousness, and in feeding, as a true shepherd, the Church of God incarnate, which he hath purchased with His own blood; nor would he have lived so beloved by listening thousands, or died so justly lamented by all descriptions of people.

The advancement of the kingdom, and the manifestation of the glory of her Lord and Redeemer, on the theatre of this world in which he was crucified, was ever dear to the benevolent heart of the Countess; and the many proofs of his approbation which the great Head of the Church condescended to favour the ministry of Mr. Cadogan, excited in her the spirit both of supplication and of thanksgiving to that Gracious Being who had called him out of nature's darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel, and made him "wise to win souls." Her excellent friend, Mrs. Talbot, had communicated the circumstances connected with the change in his sentiments, and the amazing success attending his ministrations. Having spoken of the Countess and her noble exertions to evangelize the human race, Mr. Cadogan eulogised her laudable efforts—was fired by her example, and expressed an anxious wish to be made acquainted with one with whom he hoped to pass a joyful eternity in the kingdom of his Father and his God. Mr. Cadogan's letter to

Lady Huntingdon was enclosed in one from Mrs. Talbot, and written about the beginning of the year 1780. Her Ladyship's reply is dated May 15, 1780:—

“ My dear Sir,—I feel much indebted to my excellent friend Mrs. Talbot for the honour of a letter from you, which should have met my earliest and best acknowledgments, had not business of a peculiar nature, and many pressing engagements, prevented me from using my pen. Well, my dear Sir, to God let us render all the glory! and I lift my heart in prayer to him on your behalf, that he may make you a burning and shining light! Having experienced the life and power of godliness in your own soul, be careful to approve yourself as the minister of God, as the ambassador of the Lord of life. You ask my advice as to the general tone of your pulpit addresses. Alas! Sir, who is sufficient for these things? At the foot of the Saviour's cross let us seek those rays of light which will infallibly guide us into all truth. There may you and I be ever found, in deepest humility and prostration of soul before God, renouncing all dependence on an arm of flesh, and seeking the illuminating influences of his Spirit. In contemplating the glories of Redemption—that wonderful scheme which was planned in the councils of heaven, what finite mind is not lost and absorbed! What a proof of the power of Divine grace does our own experience furnish! Each of us may say with Paul, ‘For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe in him to life everlasting.’ You say you have counted the cost, and expect hatred and opposition. Hatred to Christ and his gospel is natural to apostate man that many will treat your message with disdain. But be not discouraged in the faithful discharge of your high and honourable calling, and exclaim with sorrow, ‘Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?’ I refer you to that focus of the promises of our divine Immanuel, ‘I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.’ Earth and hell have united to frustrate the designs of God, but their united force has been as dust before the wind, when the omnipotence of Jehovah is exerted to carry into effect the councils and decrees of eternity.

“ Viewing the awful state of millions, without God and without hope in this world, cry aloud, and spare not. My dear Sir, has the gospel come to us *in power, in the HOLY GHOST, and in much assurance?* Have we not prayed a thousand times—*Thy kingdom come?* O, then, let us remember the state of the multitudes immersed in sensuality, wretchedness, and accumulated vice, and erect the standard of evangelical truth among them—disperse the seed of heaven in every direction, and the dews of heaven will descend upon it; labour to win souls to Christ, and ‘become all things to all men, if by any means you may save some.’ Let Christ be preached—only preached—the glorious gospel of God our Saviour must be the sum and substance of all your preaching. The sinners' only hope—the sinners' only friend—his blood and righteousness their only plea—this must be a prominent feature in all your addresses to your fellow-men, and the success which

has ever attended the preaching of these soul-saving truths, evinces it the only instrument for the conversion of sinners.

“ Your embassy is an embassy of love. Before Peter was sent forth, his affection and sincerity were decided in the presence of witnesses. Put the inquiry to your own heart—LOVEST THOU ME? and may God the Holy Ghost enable you to respond with scrupulous sincerity; for in this question is involved the grand security of your ultimate success here, and your final happiness in a world to come. Touched with the feelings of human misery, and tenderly solicitous for the fallen, guilty condition of man, you must display his surpassing love, and proclaim aloud the divine efficacy of that Blood which he sweat in Gethsemane, and shed on Calvary, for sinners, that it may, by the power of his Spirit, be sprinkled upon every heart, as the only antidote to cleanse and purify from sin and iniquity, and render every recipient zealous of good works. You know not the trials that are before you. Stand prepared for every event; and with Christian courage persevere through the waters and through the fires of persecution. Be wise as serpents. With a firm step resist every allurement to draw you aside. They of your own household—your brethren after the flesh, will exert all their influence to shake your confidence in the word and promises of God. No weapon formed against you shall prosper; continue, therefore, ‘grounded and settled in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.’ It is satisfactory to know ‘that your labours will not be in vain in the Lord.’ Your ‘doctrine shall drop as the rain—your speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.’ The word of the Lord ‘shall have free course and be glorified: it shall not return unto him void.’

“ And now, my dear Sir, I have to ask your forgiveness for this tedious letter. But my days are few and numbered—and I may never see your face till we meet at the right hand of the throne of God. My prayers will ever attend you, that you may be *stedfast, unmoveable*, and always abounding in the work of that divine and gracious Master who hath called you to labour in his vineyard. I now surrender you into the everlasting arms of Him who is ‘able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy.’ The Lord bless you, and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace here, and never-ending happiness in his kingdom of glory hereafter. But how feeble the benediction of a worm redeemed from earth and hell! Hear the voice of your great High Priest—our exalted Prince and Saviour—‘All power is given to me in heaven and on earth—and, lo, I am with you always!’

“ Present my cordial love and affection to dear Mrs. Talbot. Entreat her to pray for me, that my faith fail not. In the midst of weakness and discouragement, may my soul be stayed in God’s faithful word; and patiently serve the Lord, till he shall see fit to remove my vile and sinful being to serve him as he would amidst the ‘spirits of the just made perfect.’ But all my crosses and losses I account as nothing, so that I may be the poor yet honoured instrument of communicating the

unsearchable riches of Christ to perishing sinners. And ‘unto me, *who am less than the least of all saint’s*’ has this GRACE—this singular honour, been conferred for more than *forty years*. What condescending mercy to dust and ashes!—Lord, what am I, that I should be made instrumental of good to others? ‘Not unto me! not unto me!’—to thy infinite grace and mercy be all the glory!

“In the world, and yet not of it, must be your motto, my dear and reverend Sir; that Jesus may continually lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you all peace and joy in believing, is the earnest prayer of your ever affectionate friend, and servant for Christ’s sake,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

The first minister Mr. Cadogan applied to was Mr. Hallward. With Christian humility he acknowledged the injuriousness of his past conduct, pressed him to return to his former situation, and assured him his heart, his house, and his pulpit were open for his reception, and should never again be shut against him. Mr. Hallward, at the time, was promoted by his friend the Rev. Philip Gurdon, to the vicarage of Assingdon, in Suffolk, and therefore could not accept the curacy; but, dissolved in thankfulness to God for the wonderful change his grace had produced in one so qualified, by talents and situation, for eminent usefulness, he determined to go and converse with him, and strengthen his resolutions; and to rejoice with the people at the dispersion of the cloud which had so long brooded over them, and the bright prospect now opened for their future comfort and instruction. Welcomed in the most expressive and affectionate manner by Mr. Cadogan himself, and those of the congregation who once deplored his loss as the greatest calamity, he continued among them six months; and then, being obliged to return to his own flock, he left them with feelings the very reverse of those he had formerly experienced.*

About the same period that Mr. Cadogan wrote to Lady Huntingdon, his intimacy commenced with Mr. Romaine, who ever after paid him an annual visit, and encouraged him by frequent correspondence. Their mutual affection was great;

* The Rev. John Hallward was of Worcester College, Oxford, and contemporary with the late Rev. Henry Foster, Rev. Mr. Pew, Rev. Mr. Gurdon, Rev. Mr. Clark, and the six students who were expelled in 1768. Mr. Hallward died a few years since, and Mrs. Hallward survived him till January 1838. Two of their sons occupy distinguished situations as useful parochial ministers—the eldest, Rev. John Hallward, also vicar of Assingdon, married Emily Jane, eldest daughter of Charles Powell Leslie, Esq., of Glasslough, M.P. for the county of Monaghan, by his second wife, Miss Trench: and the Rev. William Hallward, Rector of Minden, in Suffolk, married Harriet, second daughter of Mr. Leslie. The Miss Leslies are half sisters to Dr. John Leslie, Bishop of Elphin. Miss Anne Leslie, third daughter of Charles Powell Leslie, M.P. for the county of Monaghan, (brother to Mrs. John and Mrs. William Hallward), married to John Gordon, Esq., of Assingdon Hall, Suffolk.

their religious sentiments were similar ; they were both Hutchinsonians and Hebreans, and their pulpits were always accessible to each other. Mr. Newton, Mr. Hill, and many other popular clergymen, whom he had invited to his house, preached for him occasionally ; and, indeed, he took too decided a part to be ashamed of his new connexions.

His family soon perceived that all hopes of his advancement to the prelacy would be plucked up by the root, unless they could dissuade or pervert him from his new line of conduct. Arguments were ineffectual : allurements were adopted. He was almost entangled in the snares they laid, when urged by the anguish of his mind, he suddenly escaped by a marriage, which for a long time produced an entire separation. The breach, however, was afterwards made up, and an intercourse re-established. In the meanwhile, his religious experience had acquired such stability, that had they renewed their attempt, he would probably have been proof against their devices. Surely the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to shield their head in the day of battle, in a manner, that on reflection, will excite perpetual admiration and praise.

Consistency of conduct, at least, compelled esteem. They who were offended at his religion, could not but admire its effects in the uniform tenor of his life ; and were even constrained to say that he was a good man. His church, who knew him better than the world did, believed there was not upon earth such another. The esteem of the congregation approached to veneration. From every part of the town and the adjacent villages, such multitudes flocked to hear him, that it soon became necessary to erect spacious galleries, and even then the church was scarcely roomy enough for the accommodation of the hearers. Never did any one enter more heartily into the work of God, nor persevere in it with greater delight. Preaching was his element ; and all his time was spent in doing good. His discourses were truly evangelical. Their whole tendency was to exalt Christ, and to lead saints and sinners to him for righteousness, pardon, and peace, and all the blessings of everlasting salvation. The manner of his delivery was forcible and manly ; and though his voice was rough, and disagreeable to strangers, yet his earnestness and wisdom always commanded attention. His style was pure, but remarkably plain ; so that the most illiterate could understand the meaning of almost every word he uttered. He aimed at usefulness, not applause ; he laboured at the simplicity of the Gospel, and endeavoured to reduce the sublime and important truths of the Bible to the level of the meanest capacity. And such an honour did God

put upon his ministry, that few persons in the present day, for the space of time he preached, have been more blessed to the conversion of young and old, rich and poor, of whom some went before him to glory.

But whilst he was thus living and labouring, approved of God, and highly esteemed by all the people, a messenger was suddenly sent from heaven, saying, "Come up hither." For, on a Thursday, as soon as he came out of the pulpit, he was seized with inflammation, and continued in great pain till the Wednesday following. During that solemn interval, the hopes and fears of his church alternately prevailed; but he lay resigned and happy, looking upward to the prize. He blessed his wife, his faithful domestic, and his friends; he expressed his hope and confidence in Him in whom he believed; and on the 18th of January, 1797, every earthly tie being dissolved, in the forty-sixth year of his age, he entered into the joy of his Lord.

Nothing particular in the history of Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Reading occurred till the death of Mr. Cadogan, when another division took place in the congregation of St. Giles's. Application was made, as soon as possible after his decease, by a person of high respectability, to secure the living for a successor of the same principles, but it arrived too late; for a gentleman of no less eminence, who resided near Reading, had already applied, and succeeded, for a clergyman, whose modesty can never be too much admired nor too much regretted. Mr. Allcock (for that was his name) deliberated, and then declined the presentation, assigning, as his motive, his inability to fill with advantage a pulpit constantly occupied for many years by so great a man as Mr. Cadogan. Unmoved by entreaties to consult the general wishes of the people, the same gentleman secured the gift for the Rev. Joseph Eyre, who, unhappily, introduced *another* Gospel from that which his lamented predecessor preached so faithfully and so successfully, which yet was not another *Gospel*, but a miserable farago of Pelagian and Socinian errors, undisguised by ingenuity and unembellished by elocution. It was not long before this gentleman displayed his zeal against Methodism and enthusiasm, which he considered to prevail and abound amongst the followers of Mr. Cadogan. At the visitation of the Bishop of Salisbury, held at Reading, in July, 1798, Mr. Eyre preached a sermon, which was afterwards published, and entitled "A Dispassionate Inquiry into the Probable Causes and Consequences of Enthusiasm." This called forth several defences of Mr. Cadogan and his doctrines, by some of his admirers. "An Apology for the Church of Christ and the Church of England," by Thomas

Willatts, Esq., is written in a truly Christian spirit, and with the laudable intention of vindicating the character of an eminent minister of the Gospel, deceased.

A considerable part of Mr. Cadogan's congregation were constrained, by the errors and imprudence of his successor, so far to separate from the Established Church, in order to retain her principles, as to erect a chapel of their own, retaining the prayers and other parts of the Church formularies. On the 14th of January, one year after the decease of Mr. Cadogan, a chapel, situated in the parish of St. Mary, was opened for the temporary accommodation of his hearers, until such time as a new one could be erected. The Rev. Rowland Hill preached morning and evening, and the Rev. John Eyre, who had been educated in Lady Huntingdon's College, and had been one of Mr. Cadogan's curates, in the afternoon. The place being incapable of seating more than four or five hundred persons, was much crowded, and the congregation remarkably attentive.

The new chapel, erected by the voluntary contributions of Mr. Cadogan's congregation, was opened, on the plan of the Countess of Huntingdon's chapels, December 16th, 1798. Mr. Eyre preached in the morning, Mr. Green in the afternoon, and Mr. Hill in the evening. Notwithstanding the place was calculated to seat conveniently a thousand persons, with considerable space in the aisles and under the galleries, it was crowded with serious and attentive hearers, who appeared to receive the word of God with much affection. The sight was truly encouraging, and brought to recollection the words of our Lord, "The fields are white already unto the harvest."

The Rev. William Green was the first minister settled among them. He had his education at Lady Huntingdon's College, at Trevecca; and was ordained in London, July 1783, at the first ordination on the plan of secession. He laboured successfully at Norwich, Bath, and other places in the connexion. Mr. Green continued but a short time with them, and for several years the chapel was supplied by various ministers, principally belonging to Lady Huntingdon. The Rev. Henry Gauntlett, Curate of Botley, near Southampton, then became the pastor; after a few years he removed to Oxfordshire, and ultimately became Vicar of Olney, where, a short time since, he died. In 1808 a separation took place at Castle-street chapel, and the old Presbyterian meeting in Minster-street was bought, refitted, and called Salem Chapel, for the use of the Separatists. The first pastor was the Rev. Thomas Wood, who afterwards removed to Jewin-street, London; he was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas Parrott, who afterwards went to Plymouth, since which

time they have been variously supplied. Castle-street, also, continued the itinerary plan until 1823, when the Rev. James Sherman, from Cheshunt College, accepted the pastoral office among them.

On the 16th of November 1823, the 25th anniversary of the laying the foundation-stone of Castle-street chapel was commemorated, and three sermons were preached on the occasion; those in the morning and evening by the Rev. Rowland Hill, and that in the afternoon, by the Rev. James Sherman. The contributions and collections for the repairs, &c. of the Chapel amounted, at the close of the services, to 467*l*. On no previous occasion was there ever witnessed in Reading such a strong desire to hear Mr. Hill. From five to six hundred persons crowded together in the street before the doors were opened, and hundreds went away who were unable to gain admission. The greatest interest and attention were manifest in the congregation, and the venerable preacher's powerful appeals to the conscience, for God and holiness, made a lasting impression on many.

CHAPTER L.

Chapel at Kidderminster—Mr. Fawcett—Mr. Wills preaches at Kidderminster—Mr. Best—Letter to Mr. Hawkesworth—Lady Huntingdon in Cornwall—Mr. Parish—Chapel at Truro—Dr. Haweis—Effects of Mr. Wills's preaching—Lady Huntingdon's Chapels in Cornwall—St. Ives—Mevagissey—Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Sir Harry Trelawney—West Looe—Lady Huntingdon's opinion of Sir Harry Trelawney—His apostacy—Mr. Wills preaches at Looe—Difference with Mr. Whitefield's Trustees—Letter from Mr. Berridge—Dr. Dodd—Mr. Romaine's opinion of him—Lady Huntingdon's Letter to Dr. Dodd—Letter from Mr. Brown of Haddington.

DURING the year 1774 Lady Huntingdon first sent some of the students from Trevecca to labour at Kidderminster, invited by the Rev. Benjamin Fawcett,* and other pious persons in the town, rendered famous by the long residence there of the well-known Richard Baxter. The ministry of the *students was*

* Mr. Fawcett was the pupil of the excellent Doddridge, and, during a period of thirty-five years, faithfully and laboriously fulfilled the duties of his office. Few ministers could more honestly adopt the language of the Apostle to the elders of the church at Ephesus:—"Ye know from the first day that I came among you, after what manner I behaved at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have taught you publicly, and from house to house."

attended with considerable success: and, some time after, a chapel was opened in her Ladyship's Connexion, which has continued to the present day. The patronage afforded them by Mr. Faucett excited the displeasure of the well-known Job Orton, then residing in Kidderminster:—

“Some strolling preachers (says he), under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, have lately set up a meeting here, which Mr. Faucett has, I think, very unwisely, rather encouraged; I suppose it will in time thin his own congregation. They preach in the Antinomian strain,* which suits many people here, who don't love *doing*, some of whom, with much zeal for orthodoxy, want common honesty. We have about us a set of serious, and most of them evangelical ministers; but the Methodists are breaking in upon them, and Lady Huntingdon's preachers, whom I know not by what name to call.”

For several years after the erection of her Ladyship's chapel at Kidderminster it was supplied by the ministers and students in the Connexion. Once or twice her Ladyship visited the people, and Mr. Shirley, Mr. Glascott, and Mr. Venn preached there with much acceptance and success. Both here and at Stourbridge, occasional preaching was established by the students. The labours of the late Mr. Griffith Williams, of London, who was educated at Trevecca, were much blessed at this time in different parts of Worcestershire, and several congregations connected with Lady Huntingdon were collected, and in some places chapels erected, where the Gospel has continued to the present day. Another of her Ladyship's students, Mr. Best, was the instrument of much good at Bewdley and other places. He afterwards took orders in the Established Church, and became incumbent of Cradeley.

The attention of the Countess was now directed to the tinnerns in Cornwall, vast numbers of whom were living in the most deplorable state of ignorance and barbarism. The preceding year Mr. Wills had been married at Bath to Miss Selina Margaretta Wheeler, daughter of the Rev. Granville and Lady Catherine Wheeler, and niece to Lady Huntingdon; and in the autumn of 1775 her Ladyship went to Cornwall on a visit to Mr. Wills, then resident-curate to the Rev. Mr. Walker's churches of St. Agnes and Peron, near Truro, whence, on the 23rd of September, she wrote thus to one of her students, the Rev. John Hawkesworth, then labouring in Dublin, whom she invited to join her in Cornwall, and aid her in scattering the seeds of eternal life in that part of the kingdom:—

* The charge of Antinomianism came with an ill grace from the eccentric Job Orton, whose preaching and sentiments were ill calculated to preserve the life of religion in any congregation.

“ My call here is to the tanners, and thousands and tens of thousands of poor perishing creatures whom all seem to neglect : their souls are the object of my loving care ; and, if the Lord permit, I wish to make three or four establishments in the heart of the tin mines for their instruction and salvation.”

From this period the light of the Gospel appears to have shone with a more than ordinary degree of splendour in this county. In the course of a few years there were no less than twenty congregations in connexion with the Countess of Huntingdon, that had their origin in the labours of the students, and were regularly supplied by her chaplains, as well as from Trevecca. The rise of the congregation at Truro must be traced to the preaching of the venerable and excellent Samuel Walker, curate of Truro, whose ministry terminated in 1760. He had formed the more serious part of his congregation into a society, consisting of two classes, which met alternately once a week, for reading a sermon and prayer, and once a week also for prayer and religious conversation, with a view to improvement in Christian knowledge and practice. On the removal of this excellent man, his people were fully sensible of the loss they had sustained, and endeavoured to supply what was wanting in the ministrations of the clergyman who filled the pulpit, by more frequent and stated meetings of the society. Several years passed in this uncomfortable state, and after many deliberations, consultations, and prayers for Divine direction, and with much dissuasion from some of their pious friends, a goodly number of them determined on procuring a place of worship, forming themselves into a church as Protestant Dissenters, and obtaining a stated ministry. Accordingly, they took the lease of a house that had been built for a cock-pit, and used for that barbarous purpose for more than half a century. It was quickly fitted up and registered, and opened for Divine worship in March 1769. For a time it was supplied by a rotation of ministers, and in May 1770, the Rev. Peter Sampson was ordained to the pastoral office. In the course of a few years the place became crowded, and the attendance of many being prevented by want of room, a new meeting-house, called Bethesda, was erected, in which Mr. Sampson continued to exercise his ministry till his decease in the year 1785. He was succeeded by others who preached in probation, and the congregation eventually chose Mr. Parish, who had been educated at Trevecca, and had itinerated in Cornwall under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon. His ministry was generally acceptable, and, in compliance with the call of the church, he became their pastor, and continued with them three years. At

the end of this period, he left them rather abruptly, and having obtained episcopal ordination, became curate to the Rev. Mr. Grand, Rector of Dirham, in Gloucestershire, who wrote to Lady Huntingdon for a character of him. He was afterwards situated at Sheffield. The next pastor was the Rev. William Paddon, a man of unquestionable piety, although not of commanding talents. He died in 1815, and was succeeded in the pastoral office by the Rev. William Moore.

The majority of Mr. Walker's congregation, who though unable to hear the ministry then exercised in the parish church, could not be prevailed upon to become Dissenters, still held their meetings in the room, as it was called, on Lord's-day and Friday evening; and on Fridays their dissenting brethren often assembled with them, as they had been accustomed to do. They were favoured with the occasional labours of the late Dr. Haweis, who was born near Truro, and had served an apprenticeship in that town with a surgeon, during the latter years of Mr. Walker's ministry, under which he was brought to the knowledge and experience of Divine truth.

Truro was the birth-place of Mr. Walker also. Soon after his ordination, on his return to his native town, he purposed to preach in the market-place, of which public notice was given. On the morning appointed, a play was to be performed at the theatre for the benefit of one of the actors. Curiosity excited the inhabitants to hear their townsman, so that considerable numbers attended; among whom were the mayor, his family, and several of the corporation. This was an unfavourable circumstance for the individual who was to partake of the profits of the stage, as the house was nearly empty in consequence, which, no doubt, irritated the enmity of the seed of the serpent against the seed of the woman; but an additional cause of rejoicing was given to the heavenly host, in the rescuing of some of the slaves from their state of captivity, inasmuch as the mayor's daughter, and several other persons, were effectually called, by the grace and Spirit of God, under that sermon.*

* Some years after the play-house being shut up, Mr. Wills went to examine its eligibility as a chapel for Lady Huntingdon. On entering, he passed two persons, one of whom paid his respects to Mr. Wills in a very polite manner, which Mr. Wills returned. After he had passed, the companion of this person said, "Pray, do you know that gentleman?" to which the other replied, "Know him! yes—I have reason to know him; he preached a sermon in the market-place some time back, on my benefit-night; the house was nearly empty, and all the people flocked to hear him." The theatre was eventually purchased by Lady Huntingdon, and thither the remains of Mr. Walker's congregation removed. It was supplied by the students for many years, like the other chapels in the Connexion. Some years since, the Rev. Samuel Eyles Pearse, who had studied at Trevecca, became the minister of this place.

The Gospel was first introduced into St. Ives by the ministers and students belonging to Lady Huntingdon, who herself visited the town in 1775, accompanied by Mr. Wills. A place was obtained for preaching in, but the cause appeared to languish for some years, till a more successful effort was made to re-introduce the Gospel into this borough by the Rev. Robert M'All, then a student itinerating under Lady Huntingdon's auspices. He eventually settled at St. Ives, and in 1804 the present neat and convenient chapel was erected and opened by him, in conjunction with other ministers of the county, and he continued to preach in it with success till the year 1818, when he removed to London. After his removal two other ministers filled the pulpit for a few years; but various circumstances arose which involved the chapel in debt, and the place seemed in danger of sinking, when the attention of the trustees of the Connexion was directed to it by Mr. Wildbore of Penryn. The Rev. T. Stevenson was appointed to the place, under whose ministry, by the blessing of God, the cause greatly revived: the debt on the chapel and expense of repairs, amounting to about 550*l.*, were discharged by Lady Huntingdon's Trustees; and for the accommodation of the increasing attendants on Divine worship and of a Sunday School, containing one hundred and fifty children, an enlargement was made in 1825. The chapel is capable of containing more than five hundred persons, and is well attended.

The origin of the chapel at Mevagissey may be traced to the visit of Lady Huntingdon to Cornwall in 1775, when there was frequent preaching there and in other parts of the county. The chapel was built about the year 1777, and was fitted up with a pulpit and desk belonging to a meeting-house at Truro, from which a congregation had removed. Lady Huntingdon contributed one hundred pounds towards the expense of the building; and the people were desirous of placing it entirely at her disposal. This her Ladyship objected to, and in a letter to Mr. Smith explained her views and the liberality of her intentions:—

“Bath, Feb. 11, 1784.

“Mr. Smith—Mr. Wills has enclosed your letter to me, relative to putting into my hands the meeting-house at Mevagissey. I am much obliged by your offer, and as a mark of confidence feel thankful, but should prefer a trust for it in proper hands that might continue; and if our ministry is or has been found useful, a clause might be for the security of their reception from our connexion, whenever those ministers should visit in Cornwall, and any occasional services they might be able to render at any time to that congregation. This I hope you

will approve, as we wish our labours as general as possible, as being more extensively useful, and to private meetings best calculated to enliven the people by the changes made. Should you approve of this our best services, (so appointed) with our prayers for every best blessing, would not fail. I am, Sir, your sincere friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

The chapel was supplied for a considerable time by Lady Huntingdon's preachers; but some unpleasant differences arising in the congregation relative to the trust, her Ladyship's services were withdrawn. Mr. Smith, to whom the above letter was addressed, was brought to the knowledge of the truth under the preaching of Mr. Whitefield at Plymouth, and on his removal to Mevagissey, united with a few persons belonging to Mr. Wesley's society for prayer and mutual edification. The students who principally laboured at this place were Mr. Clayton, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Renfrew. Mr. Wills, her Ladyship's chaplain, Mr. Heath, of Plymouth-dock, and Mr. Sampson, of Truro, were the trustees.

The interest at St. Columb originated with some of the converts of Mr. Walker of Truro. The late Henry Warne, Esq., one of the fruits of his ministry, caused a large room on his own premises to be registered, in which Dr. Haweis, whose estate was in the neighbourhood, often preached, and for some years conducted the service alternately with Lady Huntingdon's students. Mr. Wills also preached frequently amongst them, and was instrumental to much good. Some years after a chapel was erected, and a church formed. The congregation is in a prosperous state, and a Sunday-school is established in connexion with the church.

When Mr. Wills was appointed chaplain to Lady Huntingdon, he resigned the curacy of St. Agnes; and knowing that his flock was not likely to hear the everlasting truths of the Gospel in spirit and in truth from his successor, sold part of his family plate for the purpose of erecting a place of worship. The chapel was supplied by the preachers in Lady Huntingdon's connexion, particularly by Mr. Wildbore, of Penryn, who preached once every Sabbath-day with great usefulness; but was obliged to relinquish it in consequence of the growing prosperity and importance of his own congregation at Penzance, and the increasing demands on his time. The congregation is respectable and the people pious.

About this period Sir Harry Trelawney, a young baronet from Oxford, had become a very zealous revivalist, and his opinions and efforts drew down upon him the displeasure of the heads of his college. Sir Harry was at this time a very young man, and

wrote and acted with all the fervour of youth. He was most anxious for an interview with Lady Huntingdon, which he soon obtained, and they had much conversation on the means of promoting the extension of Divine truth. About Midsummer 1774, Sir Harry Trelawney, while yet a student of Christ Church, Oxford, began to preach the Gospel in the town of West Looe. His first sermon was delivered in the open air, but near the door of a house which consisted chiefly of one long room; and, as it was his own property, he afterwards addressed the people within the building, which was shortly subsequent converted into a very neat and commodious meeting-house at his own expense. The novelty of the proceeding, and the rank of the preacher, occasioned much conversation in the town, and the new doctrine, as it was then considered, was soon opposed in different ways; but although some attended divine service only to gratify their malice by spreading slander against the doctrine and preacher, and others from motives of mere curiosity, yet there is reason to hope that not a few heard the Word with gladness, and brought forth the fruits of holiness. There was a most pompous ordination of Sir Harry Trelawney at Mr. Kingsbury's meeting, at Southampton, April 22, 1777. Shortly after Sir Harry's first efforts at St. Looe, the Rev. Rowland Hill preached a few sermons there; and the Rev. John Eyre, late of Hackney, then one of Lady Huntingdon's students, laboured occasionally with great zeal, piety, and diligence, and thus a Christian church was formed, which was strengthened by the exertions of the Rev. John Clayton, whose labours with those who were joined with him in the work, operated as a powerful attraction, so that the people began to flock to hear the Gospel from the neighbouring parishes, many of them walking several miles, Sabbath after Sabbath, and a spiritual unction seemed to attend the Word preached; although the minds of the people had but a short time before been covered with such a thick cloud of ignorance and prejudice, that it had been observed of them, they would not receive the message of an angel from heaven. Mr. Clayton removed to London in the year 1778, the Christian society at that time consisting of nearly seventy members, besides some individuals who were not registered in the visible church, but of whom little doubt is entertained that their record was on high.

Sir Harry Trelawney appeared eminently formed for usefulness, both by nature and religion. In no character were Christian zeal and charity more happily united. With regard to natural endowments, he was greatly distinguished by a retentive memory, which was called forth on many occasions. To this

faculty he united a lively imagination, a solid judgment, and a ready utterance. With regard to his views of Christianity, he might be pronounced an Independent, and a moderate Calvinist. He vindicated his nonconformity in "A Letter addressed to the Rev. Thomas Alcock, M.A., Vicar of Runcorn, in Cheshire, and of St. Budeaux, Devon." In this pamphlet, he insists chiefly on these two points: 1st. That subscription to Articles that we do not believe is a dishonest and prevaricating business. 2nd. That by remaining a Dissenter he secured that freedom of mind which is the birthright and unalterable privilege of every rational creature. Notwithstanding this declaration (so inconsistent is the conduct of human beings), Sir Harry immediately after returned to Oxford, procured ordination in the national Establishment, and was made a country rector in the west of England.

But Sir Harry Trelawney was no honour to any party—there was too much versatility in his character. Lady Huntingdon seemed to have observed this disposition, and wisely kept aloof from him. On one occasion she remarks—

"I do not admire so much zeal in things of inferior consequence; the Gospel of our adorable Lord, and the salvation of the perishing multitude, claim all my best wishes and meanings. And this formed the principal topic of conversation with Sir Harry in my last interview. So much contention for order and church discipline, subscription to Articles, &c., in a mind like his, all ardent, all on fire, may tend to extinguish the light, and quench the flame of Gospel truth and holiness. To contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints is our duty, but to contend for non-essentials, the hay, the wood, and stubble, when darkness reigns around us, and the most awful ignorance prevails, is a device of the great enemy, and ought to be avoided. My one object on earth is to serve my dear Lord and Master, and endeavour by every means to extend his kingdom among men. I wish all success, though they gather not with me."

An alteration soon took place in the sentiments of Sir Harry; he abandoned the ranks of the orthodox, and attached himself to those whom he called rational Dissenters. The meeting-house was sold for a malt-house, and a particular clause in the lease tied up the tenant from applying it to any religious use whatsoever; and this, notwithstanding he had signed writings for putting it into the hands of twelve trustees for Divine worship; but they confiding in his religion and honour, left the writings in his hands, which it is presumed he destroyed. Soon after the chapel was shut up, Mr. Wills visited Looe, and preached a consolatory and encouraging sermon to the people, in the open air, near Sir Harry's meeting-house, upon a piece of ground then called the Bowling-green, but which has since been nearly covered with buildings. The text that appeared most suit-

able on this occasion, as many had been so grieved, and others questioned the truths preached by this volatile baronet, and the poor people that had been called were left as sheep without a shepherd, was from these words—"Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure." From hence Mr. Wills endeavoured to show, notwithstanding the awful apostacy of ministers, the "foundation of God stood sure." The discourse made an indelible impression upon the minds of many of his hearers, particularly of those who had most deeply felt their want of the means of spiritual instruction.*

Knowing the circumstances of the people at Looe, Lady Huntingdon, from time to time, sent some of the students to preach to them, by which means, deserted as they were, the life of religion was supported in their hearts. Among the students were Messrs. Upton, Oats, M'All, and others. After the meeting-house had been shut up about four years, the few pious persons who were still remaining felt a desire, if possible, to obtain another, and made contributions among themselves for this purpose, with which they purchased the freehold of a small piece of land on the Quay. Their next step was to solicit the aid of friends to the cause of Christ, in which they so far succeeded that the edifice was soon commenced, and Mr. Wills fortunately happening to be in the neighbourhood while it was in progress, preached in it some time before it was finished, from Psalm cxxvi. 3, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." After various vicissitudes for nearly forty years, this little flock have at length arrived at the promised and desired rest—the full and punctual enjoyment of Gospel ordinances.

In the year 1776 there was some misunderstanding between Lady Huntingdon and the trustees of Mr. Whitefield's chapels, which arose from the conduct of certain individuals connected with the Gloucestershire association, some of whom had endeavoured to draw away the most popular and talented young men among the students at Trevecca. The early part of the year 1777, Mr. Berridge paid his annual visit to the metropolis, when he had abundant opportunities of inquiring into the unpleasant differences subsisting between her Ladyship and Mr. Whitefield's trustees. The result of his inquiries, with some observations on Churchmen and Dissenters, which evince the truly Catholic spirit of this excellent minister of Christ, he gives in

* Sir Harry Trelawney married, in 1778, Anne, daughter of the Rev. James Brown, rector of Pertishead, and vicar of Kingston, county of Somerset. Lady Trelawney died in November 1822, and Sir Harry in February 1834.

the following letter to her Ladyship, dated Everton, April 26, 1777:—

“ My dear Lady,—Mrs. Carteret, a well-favoured pilgrim, tells me I owe you a letter; and your Ladyship might tell Mrs. Carteret I owe you much love, which will ever be paying, I trust, and never be paid. Demands on this score, if honestly made, are always welcome; and if roguishly practised, are quickly forgiven. For, who ever thought of hanging a *love thief*, except a disappointed lover? A miser, who cannot open the string of his purse without pain, can part with the string of his heart freely to a bountiful friend; and the favours you have shown me call out for more than one heart-string—a dozen at least. ‘ Well, well, enough of this,’ you say; ‘ but what have you seen or heard at London? As you are an old fellow, with a prattling tongue, I shall expect a long history, but let it be a faithful one.’ Indeed, my Lady, I have seen and heard some things to please me, and some things to grieve me. I have seen the Tabernacle-temple well crowded with attentive hearers, which has cheered my heart; but the Tabernacle-house deserted by your students, which has grieved my spirit. Upon asking the cause, I was told the trustees were suspected of a design on your Mulberry Gardens. What has occasioned that suspicion I know not, but I well know they had no more desire to steal your *Mulberries* than to steal my *teeth*; and I believe the *profit* of the mulberries, if that base thing had been in view, would no more enable them to buy a crust, than my old teeth would enable them to bite it. When the yearly accounts of the two chapels are made up, I know they are sometimes below par, and have seldom 20% in hand; and the Mulberry Gardens, if under their management, were not likely to produce any other gain, besides trouble. Indeed, my Lady, I am well satisfied that the trustees have been your hearty friends and faithful servants; and am sorry to find they are much offended at your suspicions. Could I discern lucrative views in them, as much as I love Tabernacle (that old bee-hive, which has filled many hives with her swarms), I would visit her no longer. But the more I know of the trustees, the more I am confirmed of their integrity, which they will give a proof of shortly, by adopting Dr. Ford as a third trustee.

“ Well, now I am prattling, I must even prattle on; an old man’s tongue is like a larum—when it sets off, though teasing enough, it will run down. But you cry, ‘ No more griefs, pray, Mr. Grievous, unless you intend to set me a yawning.’ Indeed, my Lady, I have another; and beg you would seal up your lips to prevent yawning, if that is indecent out of a church. I am told, and simply tell you my tale, that since the trustees were dismissed your service, you have taken a Tory ministry, are growing sadly churchified, and seem to walk with a steeple on your head, newly sprung up, but pointing very high. As to the steeple, I heed it not; a smart heavenly breeze will soon blow that down; but I cannot be reconciled, like some of my brethren, to a Tory ministry and a church-wall spirit. I regard neither high church nor low church, nor any church, but the Church of Christ, which is not built with hands, nor circumscribed within peculiar walls, nor confined

to a singular denomination. I cordially approve the doctrines and liturgy of the Church of England, and have cause to bless God for a church-house to preach in, and a church revenue to live upon. And I could wish the Gospel might not only be preached in all the British churches, but established therein by Christ's Spirit, as well as by a national statute; but from the principles of the clergy, and the leading men in the nation, which are growing continually more unscriptural and licentious, I do fear our defence is departing, and the glory is removing from our Israel. Perhaps, *in less than one hundred years to come, the church-lands may be seized on to hedge up Government gaps, as the abbey-lands were two hundred and fifty years ago.** But you say the Lord is sending many Gospel labourers into the church. True; and with a view, I think, of calling his people out of it. Because, when such ministers are removed by death, or transported to another vineyard, I see no fresh Gospel labourer succeed them, which obliges the forsaken flocks to fly to a meeting. And what else can they do? If they have tasted of manna and hunger for it, they cannot feed on heathen chaff, nor yet on legal crusts, though baked by some stanch Pharisee quite up to perfection. What has become of Mr. Venn's Yorkshire flock—what will become of his Yelling flock, or of my flocks, at our decease? Or what will become of your students at your removal? They are virtual Dissenters now, and will be settled Dissenters then. And the same will happen to many, perhaps most of Mr. Wesley's preachers, at his death. He rules like a real Alexander, and is now stepping forth with a flaming torch; but we do not read in history of two Alexanders succeeding each other. But, you reply, 'some of my best preachers leave me in my life-time.' Perhaps they may; and if I may judge of your feelings by my own, on such occasions, this must grieve you, on the first view at least; but wait and see whether the Lord's hand be not in it. I dare not commend Barnabas for his abrupt departure from Paul; yet it might be permitted, with a view of sending him to Cyprus. The Lord can, and often does, make the wrath of man, or the foolishness of man, turn to his praise. However, it is good for us, I know, to have our well-meant views frequently perplexed and overturned, else we might grow headstrong, and fancy ourselves wise enough to be the Lord's privy-councillors, yea, able to out-counsel Him. We had rather sit with Jesus at the council-board than follow him with a string on our nose, to turn us round, or turn us back, at his pleasure. Some years ago, two of my lay preachers deserted their ranks, and joined the Dissenters. This threw me into a violent fit of the spleen, and set me a coughing and barking exceedingly; but when the phlegm was come up, and leisure allowed for calm thought, I did humbly conceive the Lord Jesus might be wiser than the old vicar; and I did well in sending some preachers from the Methodist mint among the Dissenters, to revive a drooping cause, and set old crippled pilgrims on their legs again. Nay, it is certain that some of these deserting preachers have not only quickened the Chelsea invalids, but raised up new and vigorous recruits for the king's service.

* Is not this vaticination of the veteran of Everton approaching every day towards fulfilment?

Be glad, therefore, my Lady, to promote the Lord's cause in any way—in your own line, if it may be ; in another line, if it must be. If your preachers abide with you, and are valiant for the truth, it is well ; if they depart, let them depart, and rejoice you have been instrumental in sending them forth. If a lively preacher goes, he will prove a live coal among dying embers ; if a dead one departs, he is buried out of your sight.

“ Paul tells me in one place, ‘ All in Asia are turned aside from me ;’ and in another he says, ‘ Some preached Christ out of envy and strife,’ out of envy and opposition to him ; yet adds, ‘ What then ? Every way Christ is preached ; and therein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.’ Here is a pattern for our imitation. However rusty or rickety the Dissenters may appear to you, God hath his remnant among them, therefore lift not up your hand against them for the Lord's sake ; nor yet for consistency's sake, because your students are as real Dissenting preachers as any in the land, unless a gown and band can make a clergyman. The Bishops look on your students as the worst kind of Dissenters ; and manifest this by refusing that ordination to your preachers which would be readily granted to other teachers among the Dissenters.

“ When I consider that the doctrines of grace are a common offence to the clergy, and the Bible itself a fulsome nuisance to the great vulgar ; that powerful efforts have been made to eject the Gospel doctrines out of the Church ; and the likelihood there is, from the nation's infidelity, of a future attempt succeeding ; there is room to fear, when the Church doctrines are banished the Church by a national act, Jesus will utterly remove the candlestick, and take away his Church bread from those hirelings who eat it and lift up the heel against him.

“ So you are whispering to Lady Anne, ‘ This old vicar is very tedious, and growing pedantic too. He would fain turn a Seer, and has not wit enough for a common conjuror, or a strolling fortune-teller ; but he is often eat up with the vapours, poor man, and I must excuse him.’ Indeed, I am not *wholly* eaten up with the vapours, nor cannot, because I am much eaten up aforehand with esteem for your Ladyship. I know your zeal for the Master's honour, and for the prosperity of his Sion, which must endear you to every honest-hearted pilgrim. The good Shepherd be your guide and guard ; may His cloud direct all your motions, and distil a gracious dew upon yourself, and upon your students ! Please to present my respects to Lady Anne, and Miss Orton ; and believe me to remain your hearty well-wisher and affectionate servant,

“ JOHN BERRIDGE.”

Early in May, Lady Huntingdon went into Derbyshire, where she remained a few weeks, regulating the societies in connexion with her, which had rapidly increased during the preceding year. After spending a short time at Nottingham and Leicester, she returned to London by the end of the month ; and on the 5th of June set out for Northamptonshire, from whence she proceeded to Oxford, Whitney, Stroud, Gloucester, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, and Worcester. In most of these places the students had

laboured with considerable success, and numerous congregations were collected. Her Ladyship spent a fortnight at Worcester, and then proceeded to Monmouth, where much opposition was made to out-door preaching. On her way to Trevecca, her Ladyship paid a short visit to Mr. Gwynne, at Garth, who was then much indisposed.

The case of the celebrated but unfortunate Dr. Dodd occupied much of the public attention at this time. On entering into orders he became a popular preacher in London, and added to his celebrity by promoting the Magdalen charity, for which Dr. Squire, bishop of St. David's, gave him a prebend in the collegiate church of Brecknock. He also obtained private pupils, one of whom was heir of Lord Chesterfield, by whose interest he was made chaplain to the King, on which he took his degree of Doctor of Laws. At this period he was in the zenith of his popularity. Having a pleasing form, a genteel address, and a lively imagination, he was equally celebrated for accomplishments which seldom accompany a life of learned retirement. His introduction into high life was his ruin. He became fond of the elegance of dress, and was, as he ludicrously expressed it, a zealous votary of the God of dancing, to whose service he dedicated much of that time and attention which he could borrow from his more important avocations. The habits of dissipation and expense which he had acquired, now obtained so great an influence over him, that he became involved in considerable debts. To extricate himself from them, he was tempted to an act which entirely cut off every hope he could have entertained of rising in his profession, and totally ruined him in the opinion of the world. Whether from the suggestions of his own mind, or from the persuasion of some friend, is uncertain; but, on hearing that the living of St. George's, Hanover-square, was vacant, he took a step of all others the most wild and extravagant, and least likely to be attended with success. He caused an anonymous letter to be sent to Lady Apsley, offering the sum of *three thousand pounds*, if by her means he could be presented to the living. The letter was immediately communicated to the Chancellor; and, after being traced to the sender, was laid before his Majesty. The insult offered to so high an officer by the proposal, was followed by instant punishment. Dr. Dodd's name was ordered to be struck out of the list of chaplains. The press teemed with satire and invective; he was abused and ridiculed in the papers of the day; and, to crown the whole, the transaction became the subject of entertainment in one of Mr. Foote's pieces at the Haymarket.

To console him under this disgrace, his pupil then become

Earl of Chesterfield, gave him the living of Wing, in Buckinghamshire. Previous to this event he had been on terms of great intimacy with Lady Huntingdon, the Wesleys, Miss Bosanquet, afterwards Mrs. Fletcher, Mr. Romaine, and others well known in the religious world; but the increasing reproach of the Cross, and the growing stigma of Methodism which began to asperse his character, made him decline their acquaintance. Looking to the preferments and good things of the Church, unattainable in the course Mr. Romaine and others like-minded were determined to pursue, made him very shy of all those who endeavoured to propagate the peculiar doctrines of Jesus to others. Their zeal, spirituality, and labours, had left Dr. Dodd far behind; so that every day, like diverging lines, their tempers and pursuits were at a greater distance from each other. Notwithstanding the kindness of Lord Chesterfield, he forged a bond in the name of that nobleman, for which he was condemned at the Old Bailey, Feb. 24, and executed June 27, 1777.

Wonderful exertions were made to save the life of this unhappy man. Besides the petitions of many individuals the members of the several charities which had been benefited by him, joined in application to the throne for mercy; the city of London likewise, in its corporate capacity, solicited a remission of the punishment, in consideration of the advantages which the public had derived from his various and laudable exertions. The petitions were supposed to be signed by nearly *thirty thousand* persons. They were, however, of no avail.

There have been various opinions as to the genuineness of Dr. Dodd's repentance. In contemplation of his fate, he appeared humble and penitent; but his repentance did not seem so genuine as that of Bishop Atherton in like circumstances. Dr. Johnson, who visited him in prison, described him as being "without cant." But the wretched divinity of Dr. Johnson at that time could afford no man comfort or consolation on the verge of an eternal world. Mr. Romaine visited him frequently; and at one time, when leaving the prison, he was asked by a friend what he thought of the Doctor? Mr. Romaine replied, "There is great difference between *saying* and *feeling*—'God be merciful to me a sinner;'" which would seem unfavourable. When Dr. Dodd began the world he was a zealous favourer of Hebrew learning, and, from a professed similitude in studies and principles, cultivated an acquaintance with Mr. Romaine; but when he forsook such companions, having loved this present world, he told Mr. Romaine that he should be glad to see him at his house, but hoped not to be

acknowledged by him, if they should happen to meet in public company. All intercourse therefore ceased between them, till the love of the world, and the things that are in it, brought its victim to prison.

Several letters were addressed to him while under sentence of death: one from Miss Bosanquet, which was published; and also one from Lady Huntingdon, which appeared in all the papers after the Doctor's execution, and which Mrs. Elizabeth Carter said she could not understand, from its confusion of ideas and sentiments; of this, let the reader judge:—

“Reverend Sir,—From the first hearing of your unfortunate situation, I could not look to any other source of support and comfort for you, than to Him who chose for our sakes to be numbered with transgressors. You are master of every rational and Scripture argument; in this, perhaps, inferior to few; and I earnestly pray God these may have their place, and their times of consolation for you.

“But reason, or the wisest conclusion drawn even from truth itself, neither removes the stings of guilt, nor possesses the soul with that ‘peace, which ever passes (the best informed) understanding.’ O, no; nothing can be your point now but that voice of Almighty power, which spoke from the Cross to your suffering companion there: and we all, like him, must pass sentence upon ourselves, and say, ‘*We indeed receive the due reward of our deeds.*’ How soon the welcome request, ‘*Lord, remember me!*’ &c., reached the heart of our Divine Substitute! how speedy the relief!—how lasting and complete the comfort!

“The meaning of my prayers and tears for your grief would have no other language, but—*Go, and do thou likewise.* Forgive; and do not wonder you should find my views so limited, as this seems, for your only relief. Were life extended to its latest possible period, no solid or well-grounded hope of happiness could subsist except by this purely interior blessing alone. This it is that makes the little good we possess on earth have all its safety; and by it are all the various evils of a miserable world wisely or rationally supported. Thus every thing unites to render the importunity of your suffering heart the happy subject of this mercy. This mercy, once obtained, will bear you through the fluctuating emotions and various views of life and death; which may so immediately and naturally operate upon you, it may cause you even to glory in tribulation. May you thus rejoice in the truth and power of that religion you have so long professed, and taught to others; and, becoming a witness of our Saviour's grace to sinners, be enabled to preach the best sermon you ever preached in your life, and that too to people the most miserable, the most ignorant of the high Christian privilege of salvation by the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! Should he answer the affectionate cries of his poor unworthy people for you, and that arm of infinite consolation be stretched out for your strength and eternal blessedness, how little will the appendages of death appear, which to mere suffering nature are so bitter! And

how thankfully will you see justice and mercy thus met together, and mixed in that cup, so severe in the eyes of others! or, should the tender compassions of royal mercy be extended, to save you from the suffering of the present hour; yet in life, or in the more remote event of death, this grace must be the one and only cause of praise for you through time and eternity. It is for this I would most affectionately recommend you day and night; and it is to Him who is able to do abundantly above all we can ask or think. And thus I beg to remain a sympathising friend; and, Reverend Sir, your humble servant,

“South Wales, June 1777.”

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

Early in November Lady Huntingdon wrote to Mr. Jones of Langan, requesting him immediately to set off for Norwich, there being no supply for the Tabernacle but one student, and it was customary at that period to have a clergyman of respectability always on the spot. The society requiring some regulation, and Lady Huntingdon being unwilling to leave Trevecca at that season of the year, Lady Anne Erskine consented to undertake the journey, and Mr. Jones was accordingly directed by Lady Huntingdon to call at Trevecca, in order to accompany Lady Anne to Norwich.

In 1799 Lady Huntingdon received for her College at Trevecca, a present from the celebrated Brown of Haddington, of all his works. They were accompanied by a letter, with which we shall conclude the present chapter. It is dated Haddington, August 17, 1779, and runs thus:—

“Madam,—Scarce had my last to you got into the post-office, when I began to fear I had been too rash, insomuch as indirectly hinting that I had some thoughts of presenting your Theological Society with a copy of that system of divinity which, for about twelve years past, I have essayed to teach to a somewhat similar society of candidates for the holy ministry. It appeared to me presumptuous-like to suppose that the prelections of one who had had so little of a regular education, whose poverty of diction, and want of an ear, rendered him incapable to express himself handsomely to an English ear, and who had vainly squandered away much precious time and talent in the vain attempt to be an universal scholar, could be useful to a seminary which had teachers with far superior advantages and abilities. However, being by your Ladyship’s repeated condescensions led into a kind of promise, my conscience and my credit as a minister and a Christian, seemed to forbid my drawing back, without your allowance. This I blushed to ask. I therefore applied myself to transcribe the copy, as I have not a hand to trust to do it exactly; and amidst a scene of distress, in my person and in my family, have got it accomplished as it stands. This distress I plead as an excuse for the badness of my writing and for so long a delay. I have sent it by, I think, a safe hand for you, directed to the care of Messrs. Vallance and Simmons, printers of the ‘Gospel Magazine,’ in Cheapside, London, No. 120, from whom the

carrier can bring it to you, if you please to direct him. After an introduction chiefly directed against the fashionable scheme of the Infidel Deists, it attempts to extract every thing in religion from the oracles of God, and to comprehend the marrow and substance of what I think proper for ministers to preach, or sinful men to hear for promoting their eternal salvation. As plain Scripture texts bid fairer to fix themselves on man's consciences than any human reasoning, I have dealt plentifully in those which, with us, students are requested to repeat on their being quoted to them, in order to oblige them to become mighty in the Scriptures. Candour, I thought required me to transcribe one copy without reserve, which occasions a few hints towards the close, in favour of our church government and worship in this country. These, I hope, will be so far from giving offence with you, that it will occasion you a delightful satisfaction to observe how extensive and important the agreement, and how small the difference of religious sentiments, there is between a professedly staunch Presbyterian and a truly conscientious Episcopalian, if they both cordially believe the doctrine of God's free grace, giving unto men eternal life of holiness and happiness through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord. The hearty belief of this doctrine would unite us in the warmest affection to one another. Perhaps compassion to my rashness may require your Ladyship to conceal how you came by the manuscript, till by yourself or your learned friends you see whether it will be any way useful to your Theological Society; and, if it is thought to be no way useful, it may be returned to the care of Mr. James Hastil, carpenter, in Portland-street, Cavendish-square, London, No. 72. If it is found to be any way useful to your students, I, as a distinguished debtor to the free grace of God, heartily dedicate it to their service as a token of my affection to them as friends of the Gospel of this grace, and as a token of my bidding them 'God speed,' though they follow not with us. And I leave it to your Ladyship to direct the presentation of it to them in what manner you judge best. Only, in such a case, it might be proper that one of them who hath a good hand should write out a plain copy of it, for the more easy perusal. I intended to have sent along with it a dozen or two of the catechism that comes with this, as a present to the boys and girls in your family service, but could not presume to trouble the bearer with any more bulk; but if I could get the smallest hint that they would be acceptable, I should see to get them conveyed by another. But, dropping the superficial chat concerning my poor books, let us have a word concerning that great, that glorious, that truly original *Book of God*—GOD MADE MANIFEST IN THE FLESH. Blessed be God for our English translations of his oracles, and of our safe and easy access to peruse them. Blessed be God for the Hebrew and Greek originals of the Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. And blessed be above all blessings, and praised be God for that Original Bible, Jesus Christ, of which he himself hath *engraved the engraving*. O for grace to regard it day and night till we go to see him, and God in him, as he is, and know him even as we are known! O, to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord! How delightfully wonderful is God made manifest in the

flesh ! The man who is God's fellow, and in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily ! How stupendous his person—God man ! How marvellous the union and communion of his nature ! How bright, how amiable, an image he is of the invisible God ! How fragrant and heart-cheering, how wonderful his unnumbered names, like ointment poured forth, and all full of grace, mercy, and love, towards men ! How answerable his offices to promote the glory of God to the highest in the rich, the free, the eternal salvation of sinful man ! How deep, how kind, his thoughts to usward ! How gracious, powerful, and quickening his words ! How marvellous all his works in the room of and towards men ! How unbounded his fulness of righteousness, grace, and glory ! And, to augment the wonder more, all that he is, all that he has, and all that he doth, is for men, for sinful men—for above many, sinful, wretched, worthless you,—for, above all, sinful, worthless wretched me. What shall we say to this ? of God we are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Astonishing ! Are we, who are altogether born in sin, and dead in trespasses and sins—we, who so richly deserve to be in hell, in CHRIST JESUS ? Hath God, whom we offended ; God, whom we attempted to murder ; God, whom we hated with our whole heart and soul, and mind and strength, put us into Christ, instead of putting us into the lowest hell ? in answerableness to our infinitely wicked and destructive folly and ignorance—guilt and crimes—base-ness, sinful pollution, and ungodliness—bondage, and danger, and misery—is Christ Jesus made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ? Is he made all this to us ? Is he made all this to us by God, who maketh nothing in vain ? Why do we not stir up our souls to possess what the Lord our God giveth us ? Why are we slack to claim, to take, to live on, all that God hath made ready for us, and by free grants in the Gospel, and by effectual influence, hath made our own ? If Christ Jesus is then so much to us—made of God so much to us—why should any thing but Christ and God in Christ, get such room in our hearts—why should not the heart and mind be thoroughly widowed to all things but Jesus Christ ? Alas ! why should we, as though we were half beasts, half devils, attempt to live on dust and sin, rather than on Jesus Christ ? However, this sad life will soon be over with you and me, I hope. Death must soon break down our prison-walls and let us fly to God, as our exceeding joy. Our body of death must give place to perfection in holiness. Our vain and wicked thoughts must give place to thoughts fixed only upon the Lord. Our twilight and transient blinks of the glory of God must give place to seeing him as he is in the face of Jesus Christ. And O, how we will admire and adore the grace that brought us thither ! and how we will sing songs to our well-beloved, to the tune of ' For his mercy endureth for ever ; ' or, shall I say to the tune of ' Thou art my God, and I will exalt thee ; my God, and I will praise thee ? ' May this, your husband Christ, guide you with his counsel, while here, and afterwards bring you to his glory ! This from, Right Honourable Lady, your most humble servant,

“ JOHN BROWN.

“ P.S.—As I have had so little acquaintance with persons in high

station, I hope your Ladyship will forgive whatever expressions or freedom unsuited to your dignity and outward station, you discern in any hints of mine. Though it is chiefly in your high character of a redeemed bride, the Lamb's wife, that I address you, I would not choose to use any freedom unsuited to the dignity of the Countess of Huntingdon."

CHAPTER LI.

Labours of the Students—Extract from Lady Huntingdon's Letters—Itinerant Preaching—Circular Letter from Lady Huntingdon—Letter to the Committee of Mulberry Gardens—Journals of Messrs. Wills, Glascott, Taylor, and Piercy—Success of their Labours—Out-of-door Preaching—Secession—Observations on Toleration—Letter to the Bishops—Dr. Lowth—First Ordination at Spafields Chapel—Particulars of the Ceremony—Articles of Belief.

THE work of God, by means of the Connexion, now became greatly extended. From all parts of the kingdom the most earnest applications for assistance were received, so that, about this time Lady Huntingdon wrote to one of her ministers in America,—

"The bearer will inform you of the great and blessed honour my poor labours receive from the Lord's gracious hands, and the scores of thousands now walking in the path to glory, together with multitudes dying in the faith, and these called over the greatest part of both England and Wales. Your old beloved house, the College, flourishing with grace in their hearts, and much glory upon their labours."

To another student she writes thus:—

"Our work is so blessed—the Lord so honours every part of the plan, and the new students in an amazing manner, that we are all bound to say *Great and glorious are thy works, thou King of saints; who would not love thee?* Our opening in Lincolnshire promises great things, and the West, where you laboured, and are dearly beloved, blossoms as the rose. Vast numbers of congregations are gathered. I shall go down at the end of the year to settle them all. In Wales, where you are often asked after, and as much beloved, the work spreads far and wide; and remarkable and most awful visitations attend all that do in any measure oppose, which seems to stop the present persecutions from all quarters. I could enlarge on your various blessings. Mr. Glascott, Mr. Shirley, and Mr. Peckwell, are blessed, honoured, and owned of the Lord gloriously. The latter has gone to London to preach on Hampstead Heath, and elsewhere, out of doors. It seems to be the prevailing spirit of the present students to do this everywhere. * * The gift of awakening seems much continued to our

plan and work. The spread is astonishing? The College does not yet fill equal to our calls, but the fewer the more useful. They appear like Gideon's army; only those that had the right cap were to have the victory, and the thousands of others had neither part nor lot in the spoils."

Students from Trevecca were now labouring in almost every county of England, and with very considerable success.

One method of exciting attention to the Gospel, planned about this time, and which proved eminently successful, was that of sending at least once every year some minister of superior abilities and zeal to preach in every city, town, and larger village, throughout the kingdom.*

The clergymen commissioned by Lady Huntingdon sent regular reports to her Ladyship, which were afterwards published with an interesting account by Mr. Pentycross, Rector of Wallingford.

* We add a copy of a Circular Letter from Lady Huntingdon to her societies relative to the intended tour of Messrs. Glascott, Wills, Taylor, and Piercy, to preach through the towns and villages in different parts of the kingdom:—

"My worthy Friends,—From the various calls of many of the counties in England, it appears an important consideration to us, and alike to all, that every means in our power should be engaged for those many thousands lying in darkness, and in the shadow of death, that the voice of the Gospel by our faithful ministers should, by every means in our power, reach them also. For this best end it was concluded, at a late meeting, that the only means effectually, to reach the multitudes, was, that the four principal ministers, Mr. Glascott, Mr. Wills, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Piercy, should for three months visit universally, in four different departments, and, thus severally taken, preach through the towns, counties, and villages of the kingdom, by a general voice or proclamation of the glorious gospel of peace to lost sinners. My dear Friends, you and I have tasted the blessedness that is to be found in such a Saviour for our lost and perishing souls, and how know you but you may have many scattered friends and relations in various parts of the land, where these faithful servants of God are proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation, and that this glorious sound of heavenly and everlasting peace may reach their precious, though perhaps, yet guilty souls, and who, in the great day of the Lord, shall eternally rejoice with you? It therefore calls upon us loudly to use all diligence for the thousands that know not our God. The trifling contributions of many, may render this a universal blessing to all, and, by a free and liberal engagement in this matter, thousands may be made to rise up to praise the Lord, through your means, at the great day. The expense of the ministers as given in, will be before you, for any that may choose to examine them. The contributions of the various congregations will be transmitted to our worthy Committee at Spafelds; and wishing to share in the blessings attending the glorious and universal intention of serving many, many thousands, allow me to cast in my poor mite of fifty pounds, with your much more, begging our gracious Lord to accept it from you and from me, for his glorious Name's sake. Let us ever remember that it is not constraint, but the willingness of a cheerful giver he only delights in. May you share many consolations in your own souls, by many being called by this means out of darkness into his marvellous light! I make this request in my own name to you all: as it is the first request, so my few remaining days may make it the last from me, for my dear Master's sake, but in which we shall have jointly and alike cause to rejoice over sinners converted, with the angels in heaven.

"College, South Wales, July 17, 1781."

A few short extracts may serve as specimens of the exertions and success of these men of God. "I am engaged," says Mr. Glascott, "to preach this week at Darleston, Walsal, Dudley, Bromwich, and Birmingham. In almost all these places, if the weather is favourable, *a table will be my pulpit, the canopy of the heavens my sounding board*; and oh! that Jesus may preside in our assemblies!"*

The crowds attracted by these means were truly astonishing. "At Darleston, we had at least *fifteen hundred* poor colliers and nailers." In the streets of Dudley the congregation was computed to be *two thousand*. At Nottingham, "at eight in the morning, we had at least *two thousand*; and in the evening, at the Market cross, at a moderate computation there were not less than *five thousand*."

The journals of Mr. Wills, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Piercy, recording their labours, shew that crowds, by no means inferior to those assembling in the northern counties, thronged to hear the word of life during their tour. "At Bosveal, not less than *ten thousand* assembled in a large, deep hollow ground, rendered convenient for the preacher and hearers, by circular benches cut out of the sides from top to bottom." On preaching again at Bosveal, a few weeks after, "a large multitude assembled, the largest congregation I ever beheld, and judged to be about *twelve thousand*; an universal solemnity and awe sat on every countenance, and the Lord was in the midst of us. Even the people of the world were reminded of the judgment day, from beholding this innumerable and deeply affected assembly."

The seriousness and attention of these out-door congregations was in general exceedingly encouraging. Sometimes the vicar of the parish would stand amidst the people with his hat off, thus setting an example to the rest. At others, the joy depicted on the countenances of the crowd is not to be conceived. When writing about Wolverhampton, Mr. Glascott says, "The people came pouring down from all quarters, and I think we had the largest congregation I have yet seen since I left Bristol. Instead of riot and confusion, we had silence and attention."

The results of these labours were also very pleasing; "many were affected under the word, some appeared to be broken

* This plan of preaching in the open air has the sanction of our Lord and of his apostles, and though, since the period now under consideration, the numerous places erected for preaching the Gospel, in almost every town and village, may seem to supersede the necessity of resorting to streets and commons, yet while multitudes are found in our *highways* who scarcely ever enter a place of worship, it cannot be questioned whether the most likely way to come in contact with such persons would not be to resort anew to the *sounding board and pulpit* of the text.

down, all was very solemn, and many much affected, particularly some drunkards"—and the establishment and prosperity of the Gospel in numerous places at this day, is to be traced to the excitement produced by these itinerant labourers. The method seems indeed not only agreeable to the will of God, but singularly adapted for spreading divine light and knowledge among the ignorant and careless. We need not wonder, therefore, that even regular clergymen declared that "*nothing but the obligations and dependency of their peculiar stations restrained them from heartily joining in such labours.*" It was thus that our venerable Reformers, Latimer and others, with the word of God suspended from their girdle, traversed the land, and spread that light which Popery in vain attempted to extinguish, and, like the Apocalyptic angel, knew no limits of their labours, but the boundaries of heaven and earth. May this Gospel soon spread, till the kingdoms of this world shall become those of our Lord and of his Christ!

Whence is it that this, or some other mode of *introducing* the Gospel on those who are now indifferent to its blessed tidings, is not adopted at the present day? Will it be said that it is quite enough for the friends of the Redeemer to erect the standard of the cross, and thus to give an *opportunity* for the careless to hear the Gospel, and, if they will not improve that opportunity, the blame must lie at their own door, we are clear?

By means of these itinerant labours, and of others more stated, considerable congregations had now in various places been collected, and it became necessary to have ordained ministers stationed over them. Hitherto, the clergymen who had been episcopally ordained, had administered the Lord's Supper as occasion offered; but a more regular and frequent communion seemed requisite in places too numerous for those clergymen to attend. Episcopal ordination could now no longer be obtained for the students educated at Trevecca, and in consequence it was determined that something of this kind should be attempted.

We have already shown* how Lady Huntingdon and her Connexion were, by the persecutions of the Church, compelled to become Dissenters in the eye of the law, in order to become Christians according to the dictates of conscience.

It was, indeed, a curious phenomenon to behold a whole host of persons who rejected the name of Dissenters as an unfounded calumny, who professed themselves the truest sons of the Church,

* See p. 240, the protest of her Ladyship's chaplains, prior to which she had herself addressed Bishop Louth, who entirely condemned her Ladyship, and declared that she and her chaplains must be obedient to the hierarchy, and that he must be guided by the decision of the spiritual courts.

attached to her doctrines, ceremonies, and hierarchy, many of whom retained, even in their chapels, her Liturgy and vestments, and who still communicated at her altars, yet resorting for protection to "An Act passed to exempt persons dissenting from the Church of England from certain pains and penalties." Had they professed to dissent, it would have been a question whether the Toleration Act could have afforded them legal protection; for neither this nor any other law could be intended to provide for all possible futurity, and gather under its wing every sect, of whatever principles or practices, which might arise in the revolutions of ages. But when the Methodists declared they were not Dissenters, how could they claim the advantages of an act made to protect persons dissenting from the Church of England from the penalties of certain laws?

Yet, such was the liberality of the times, that, whenever any people chose to ask the protection of the Toleration Act, the courts of law kindly considered them as Dissenters, and defended them in the quiet *enjoyment of their principles and worship*. Had not this more silent and prudent measure been adopted, justice and liberty seemed to demand that an act should be passed to defend the Methodists from the unauthorised violence of the mob, and to rescue them from the degrading and perilous condition of holding their religion by mere sufferance, liable to be persecuted whenever a change of the prince or his ministers should produce an inclination to rob them of their dearest enjoyments. It would have been hard to punish them, because they did not choose to call themselves Dissenters, and to reward their lingering fondness for their old parent by leaving them naked and defenceless. But the introduction of a new act would have been a delicate and difficult affair, which might have occasioned so much noise as to create the most imminent hazard of raising the evil spirit, that might not be easily laid again. The politic conduct of the government, in choosing rather to give a large and liberal interpretation to the Toleration Act, was a grand step in the progress of religious liberty; for it converted this law into a much more extensive and mighty blessing than it was ever designed to be. Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Quakers, were the persons for whom the act was made; but, from the period in which the Methodists arose, it became an asylum, not only for every new sect which might separate from the Establishment, but for all her own children, who chose occasionally to play a truant part, and, like mendicant friars, to be at home or abroad, in the church or the world, as best suited their convenience. Almost a century having elapsed since this generous construction has been put upon the law, it seems to

have become the legal interpretation of its sense and intent ; so that we may say, not that the Toleration Act has thus attained its true bounds, but that it has thereby become boundless in extent, however defective it may yet be in degree.

Sunday, March the 9th, 1783, was the day appointed for the first public ordination of ministers in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, on the plan of Secession. This solemn service was held in Spafields chapel. At nine o'clock in the morning, Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor entered the chapel with six young men who were educated at her Ladyship's College at Trevecca, and who were then to be ordained to the work of the Holy Ministry, when there was the greatest solemnity visible on all the congregation, which was remarkably great on this occasion. The two clergymen took their places at each end of the Communion Table, while the six candidates seated themselves immediately in the front, and on each side of them the committee belonging to her Ladyship's chapel.

Mr. Taylor introduced the solemn service of the day with part of the 112th hymn in Lady Huntingdon's collection, viz.—

“Peace be to this congregation !”

After this Mr. Taylor prayed very earnestly and suitably to the day and work before them for the outpouring of the Spirit on himself, Mr. Wills, and his brethren then candidates for the office of ministers. For them especially he prayed that God would make them wise, able, and faithful ministers, and endue them with every gift and grace necessary for so great, important, and awful a work. He then prayed for all the ministers who loved and preached Christ—especially for those in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion—and then very affectionately for her Ladyship, and for an universal spread of the gospel. He concluded by again fervently begging for a blessing upon the work they were then about to engage in—and for a deep, solemn, and awful attention upon all the hearers.

After prayer, Mr. Taylor addressed the congregation, expressing his thankfulness to God for continuing the gospel in that chapel, notwithstanding all the storms and persecutions it had met with. He called them to witness (as a circumstance they were not strangers to) how much the ministers of Christ had been oppressed and harassed by the Ecclesiastical Courts, fines, and canons, and prevented preaching where God had evidently called them to labour. As such, he said, they were under the necessity of either knowingly and wilfully opposing the laws of the Established Church, or receding from that work which in their consciences they believed they ought not to do.

He said, therefore, as honest and conscientious men, they were determined not to oppose the laws established, nor *give up* a work God had evidently called them to. They could not, they dare not—they could not, he said, submit to those ecclesiastical canons that would prevent them from exercising that ministerial commission, in its fullest extent, which they had received from God *and man*—and which, he said, authorized them to go forth into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. As, therefore, the discipline of the Established Church prevented their doing this, and for doing it they had been cruelly and shamefully driven from that Church in which they wished to serve, they had therefore now no other method left them but to secede, or quietly withdraw themselves from it, and, under the protection of the Toleration Act, continue to *preach* faithfully the *doctrines* of that Church whose *discipline*, as honest men, they could not, they dare not submit to. Their departing from the Establishment, he said, was not with any view or design to spread error and heresies in the Church, God forbid—or from any mercenary views whatsoever—God forbid—nor from pride or ostentation, as some had sneeringly said; but with a pure and simple view for the glory of God, the furtherance of the gospel, and the good of immortal souls. So that their seceding from the Established Church was, he said, for the ease of their own consciences, and calculated, he verily believed, for the general good of mankind, and the glory of the great and glorious Head of the Church. This observation, Mr. Taylor said, it was necessary to make (in justice to themselves), while it might explain the reasons for their *seceding*. Many bitter, hard, and cruel things, he observed, had been, and he was aware would be said of them respecting their conduct in this particular; and this, he added, was done, not only by the wicked and profane, but chiefly by those professing godliness; and sorry, very sorry, he said, he was, that he was obliged to remark, that many had done it, who evidently had felt the power of God upon their own souls; but man was man—and enough was seen in the very best, to wean them from man, to trust in God alone. Jesus Christ, and not man, was their Lawgiver—the Lord and Judge of their consciences, and to Him they should stand or fall. Now, said Mr. Taylor, addressing himself to the congregation, you will easily perceive what are our present views and sentiments. This Bible, this precious Bible (laying his hand upon it), we take for our rule, and acknowledge it as such, in all matters of faith and practice. We have not, we dare not take any other; believing this Bible, therefore, to be the only standard, we receive or refuse the sentiments, opinions, and doctrines of every

man, as weighed in this balance. And further, believing this pure word of God, we do, *ex animo*, detest, abhor, and abjure that damnable and heretical tenet, which supposes either that the Pope of Rome, the Bishops of England, or any individual whatsoever, is the head of Christ's Church. This is a prerogative, it were blasphemy to say, belonging to any but Christ himself. Him therefore, and only Him, we acknowledge as such. And this pure, infallible, and eternal word, by which, he hoped and believed, they were taught, encouraged them, yea, authorised them to ordain, or set apart, these men, now before them, for the work of the ministry. Go forth, said Mr. Taylor (addressing himself to the candidates), into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, and administer the ordinances of God according to his own divine appointment, wheresoever you are called. Then (addressing himself to the congregation), he said, this right of setting such apart for the work of the ministry, we are fully persuaded, from the word of God, is not only the work of bishops, now so called, but of all the faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, who are exactly described by the presbytery deputed by the Holy Ghost, for such work in the days of the apostles. Mr. Taylor then speaking to the people, said, you will easily perceive the intent, design, and purpose of our meeting here together this morning: it is to ordain, or set apart, for the work of the ministry, these young men now before you. On our parts, we have carefully examined into their principles, and from a knowledge of them, we verily believe them to be men devoted to God; sound in the faith, and irreproachable in their lives, tempers, conduct and conversation. We hope and believe they are men whom God himself hath set apart for the work of the ministry; and whom we are this day called upon openly and publicly to ordain before you all.

Mr. Taylor then turning to the candidates said, "Remember, I beseech you, my brothers, the office you are now going to be invested with. No office can be more sublime, important, and awful than that of the ministry; and as there is no small dignity attending this office, so sure am I also, from my own experience, there is no small difficulty attending it. And now, if ever, in a day like this, we may say, Lord, who is sufficient for it? Your office, in the very nature of it, is a great trust—this the Scriptures, the pure Word of God, declare it to be, in the titles it gives to those who are called unto it. You are to be *shepherds*; as such, you are to feed the flock committed to you by the great and chief Shepherd, and which he hath purchased with his own blood, in the rich pastures of the Word of God, where is meat for the strong men and fathers, and milk

for the lambs thereof. As shepherds, be kind to, and tender and gentle over the weak of the flock. (Here he went through the various parts of the office of a shepherd, and recommended them most diligently and faithfully to attend unto it.) Mr. Taylor next observed, "they were to be *ambassadors*; as such, they were delegated from God, with terms of peace to sinners of every class and every degree." (Here he charged them most faithfully and strictly to abide by those terms, and in no case whatever deviate from them.) He told them they must not (at the peril of their souls) in anywise depart from those terms, which was the express command of God himself. He told them they were to be *watchmen*; as such, he called upon them to watch constantly and perseveringly over their own souls, and the souls committed to their care, against all their various and great enemies, and especially to take care and beware that they had not to answer for the blood of any man; but boldly and faithfully deliver the whole council of God, not fearing the face of any man. He next observed, they were to be *builders* in God's house; as such, he charged them to look to the sure foundation for themselves, and those committed to their care; to sweep away all that refuge of lies many were building upon, and remove away, like able workmen, all that straw and stubble, many were building with, to the destruction of their souls. And finally said, they were to be *labourers* in God's vineyard; as such, he called upon them to till the ground like able workmen, and plant, and sow, and water, and look to the Lord of the harvest for a large increase.

Then turning to the congregation, he begged their prayers for them in each of these particular views, viz., *Shepherds, Ambassadors, Watchmen, Builders, and Labourers*, and earnestly prayed that God would make them wise, able, and faithful ministers of the New Testament, workmen that needed not to be ashamed. Mr. Taylor then read to them the first sixteen verses of the thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel's Prophecy, and sat down.

Mr. Wills then rose, and gave out the forty-fifth hymn:—

"Captain of thine enlisted host."

Mr. Wills informed the congregation, that the Confession of Faith to be signed by all the ministers in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, and which had already been subscribed by the two ordaining ministers, and those that were to be now ordained, should be at this time publicly read, as a test of the

principles of the ministers, and as a security to the people for the great truths of the Gospel to be preached unto them.*

* Mr. Knight, the junior candidate, read as follows :—

WHEREAS we, whose names are hereunto subscribed, desirous to maintain the Christian religion in its purity, but perceiving some things in the Liturgy, and many things in the discipline and government of the Established Church, to be contrary to Holy Scripture, for the glory of God, the good of his church, and the ease of our consciences, after the most mature and solemn deliberation and prayer, have thought it necessary to secede or peaceably depart from the Establishment aforesaid.

We have therefore found it expedient, for the welfare and unity of the various congregations wherewith we are connected, under the patronage of the Countess of Huntingdon, thus solemnly, jointly, and severally to declare, that we do, according to the Word and Spirit of God, believe, confess, and subscribe, from our hearts, the following doctrines as essential parts of the Christian Faith; which we purpose and resolve, through the grace of God, publicly and privately, to maintain with all clearness and faithfulness, as we shall answer to that God who searcheth the hearts; viz.—

WE BELIEVE

I. OF GOD.

That there is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity, the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST.

II. OF THE SCRIPTURES.

That it pleased God at sundry times and in divers manners to declare his will, and the same should be committed unto writing, which is therefore called the Holy Scripture; which containeth all things necessary to salvation. The authority whereof doth not depend upon the testimony of man, but wholly upon God its author; and our assurance of the infallible truth thereof is from the inward work of the HOLY GHOST, bearing witness with the work in our hearts.

III. OF CREATION.

It pleased God, for the manifestation of his glory, in the beginning to create the world and all things therein; and having made man, male and female, after his own image, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, he gave them a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, with a power to fulfil it, yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change.

IV. OF THE FALL OF MAN FROM ORIGINAL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Our first parents being seduced by the subtilty and temptations of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit, whereby they fell from their original righteousness, and became wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. And being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same corrupted nature conveyed to all posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

V. OF ORIGINAL SIN.

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is as far as possible gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated, yet without dominion; and although there is no condemnation to them that are in

When this was finished, Mr. Wills informed the audience that each of the candidates by seniority would now be called upon to give the congregation a short account of God's dealings with

CHRIST JESUS, yet sin in them is evil as much as in others, and as such receives Divine fatherly chastisement.

VI. OF PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION.

Although the whole world is thus become guilty before God, it hath pleased him to predestinate some unto everlasting life. Predestination therefore to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore they which are endued with so excellent a benefit of God, are called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season; they through grace obey the call; they are justified freely; they are made sons of God by adoption; they bear the image of Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.

VII. OF CHRIST THE MEDIATOR.

It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the LORD JESUS, his only-begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and Man, the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Saviour of his Church, unto whom he did from all eternity give a people to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified. He therefore being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the FATHER, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, yet without sin, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary; so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the Manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion or confusion; which person is very God and very Man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and Man. This office of Mediator and surety he did most willingly undertake; which, that he might discharge, he was made under the Law, and did perfectly fulfil it by an obedience unto death; by which perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself on the Cross, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, he hath fully satisfied Divine justice, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of Heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given him. To all of whom he doth, in his own time, and in his own way, certainly and effectually apply his purchased redemption; making intercession for them; and revealing unto them, through the Word and by his Spirit, the mysteries of salvation; effectually enabling them to believe unto obedience; and governing their hearts by the same Word and Spirit, and overcoming all their enemies by his Almighty power.

VIII. OF THE HOLY GHOST.

The Holy Ghost is the third Person in the adorable Godhead, distinct from the Father and the Son; yet of one substance, glory, and majesty with them, very and eternal God, whose office in the Church is manifold. It is He who illuminates the understanding to discern spiritual things, and guides us into all truth, so that without His teaching, we shall never be effectually convinced of sin, nor be brought to the saving knowledge of God in Christ. And His teaching, whether it be by certain means which He ordinarily makes use of, or without means, is attended with an evidence peculiar and proper to itself, therefore styled the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. By which Divine power He not only enlightens the understanding, but gives a new turn or bias to the will and affections, moving and acting upon our hearts, and by his secret energetic influence effecting those things which we could never attain or accomplish by our own strength. Nor is His guidance less necessary in our lives and all

their souls in a way of grace, in their internal call to the ministry, and of their end and design in taking upon them this important, arduous, and blessed work. Accordingly, Mr.

our transactions. Without His assistance we know not what to pray for, or how to pray aright. He confirms us in all grace, and He is the author of all holiness. It is He that assures us of our personal interest in Christ, and that sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. He seals believers unto the day of redemption, and is himself the earnest of their future inheritance. He administers comfort to us in our temporal and spiritual distresses, by applying to our minds seasonable promises of God in Christ Jesus, which are yea and amen; and by receiving the things of Christ, and showing them unto us. Thus He encourageth and refresheth us with a sense of the favour of God; fills us with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; and is to abide with the Church for ever.

IX. OF FREE WILL.

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn or prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.

X. OF JUSTIFICATION.

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort. And this is done by pardoning our sins, and by accounting our persons as righteous by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto us, which is received and rested upon by faith, which faith we have not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God.

XI. OF SANCTIFICATION AND GOOD WORKS.

They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by His word and spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness; and without which no man shall see the Lord. Works which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, though they cannot put away our sins, nor endure the severity of God's judgment, yet are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.

XII. OF WORKS BEFORE JUSTIFICATION.

Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, neither do they make man meet to receive grace; yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.

XIII. OF THE CHURCH.

The Catholic, or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be, gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof, and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. The visible Church consists of all those throughout the world who profess the true religion, together with their children. To which visible Church Christ hath given the ministry and ordinances of the Gospel, for the gathering and perfecting the saints in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto.

Thomas Jones began; standing upon a platform placed for the purpose in the centre of the seat, that, being thus raised above the congregation in the area, the people might hear the better, and gave an account of his experience.

After which, Mr. Taylor gave out from the 76th Hymn, the lines beginning—

“ Let the Indian, let the Negro.”

Mr. Samuel Beaufoy then ascended the platform, and addressed the congregation.

There is no other Head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense thereof, but is that Antichrist, the man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God.

XIV. OF BAPTISM.

Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, to be continued in the Church until the end of the world; which is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person, in the name of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. This sacrament ought to be administered but once to any person; and we also hold, that infants may and ought to be baptized, in virtue of one or both believing parents, because the spiritual privilege of a right unto and a participation of the initial seal of the covenant, was granted by God to the infant seed of Abraham, which grant must remain for ever, without the Lord's own express revoking or abrogation of it, which can never be proved from Scripture that he has done. Again, they that have the thing signified have a right to the sign of it; but children are capable of the grace signified in Baptism, and some of them (we trust) are partakers of it—namely, such as die in their infancy; therefore, they may and ought to be baptized. For these and other reasons, we believe and maintain the lawfulness and expediency of infant baptism.

XV. OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather it is a sacrament of the body and blood of CHRIST, and of our redemption thereby, called the LORD'S SUPPER, to be observed in His church to the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of himself in his death; the sealing all benefits thereof to true believers; their spiritual nourishment and growth in him; their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto Him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Him and with each other as members of his mystical body. Insomuch, that to such as rightly and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ; though in substance and nature they still remain bread and wine as they were before. Those, therefore, that are void of faith, though they do carnally and visibly eat the bread and drink the wine of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, yet are in nowise partakers of Christ, but rather to their condemnation do eat and drink the sign or sacrament of so great a blessing.

The above-written articles were subscribed by us, this eighth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three.

	THOMAS WILLS,	WILLIAM TAYLOR.
Ordained at London, the	THOMAS JONES,	SAMUEL BEAUFOY,
9th March, 1783.	THOMAS CANNON,	JOHN JOHNSTON,
	WILLIAM GREEN,	JOEL ABRAHAM KNIGHT,
Ordained at London, July 16th, 1783.	DANIEL GRAY,	

This was followed by verses of the 128th Hymn, beginning—

“Run to and fro, ye heralds, run.”

Mr. Thomas Cannon next came forward, and told what God had done for his soul.

Mr. Taylor gave out the two last verses of the 76th Hymn—

“May the glorious day approaching.”

Mr. John Johnson next ascended the platform, and spoke the feelings of his heart.

When he had concluded, Mr. Wills rose from his seat, and gave out the last verse of the 129th Hymn—

“Vain is learning, parts, or merit.”

This was sung with the most fervent spirit of devotion; after which Mr. William Green spoke his experience. The two first verses of the 229th Hymn followed—

“Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim.”

Mr. Joel Abraham Knight concluded with the account of his call.

When Mr. Knight had concluded, part of the 177th Hymn was given out—

“Shall we not witness bear?”

Mr. Wills then addressed the whole congregation; his words were to the following effect:—

“You have now heard, my brethren, the several experiences of these young persons, and their respective calls to the work of the ministry. What think you? Have they a call to it from God, or have they not? Should they be admitted to ordination, or should they not? Methinks you are ready to answer, Verily they should. But I ask, Who is to admit them? Many of their brethren have been refused ordination in the Establishment under similar circumstances; nor is there a doubt that these would be treated in the same manner. What, then, is to be done? If we ourselves have a *right* on Scripture grounds to exercise the office of ordination, now is the time—it becomes our duty to do it.

“Our dissenting brethren cannot dispute the point without weakening their own hands; they cannot deny that we have at least as good a right as themselves, or their predecessors. For if we trace up the Dissenting church to its first rise, shall we not find their ministers of that time were *episcopally* ordained? and yet, though thus ordained, as ourselves are, when they were persecuted and ejected from the Establishment for nonconformity to those injunctions imposed upon them against their own consciences, were they not afterwards reduced to the necessity of ordaining amongst themselves? And did they exercise this office without *Scripture authority*, yea, and perfect consistency with their own principles? Do the Dissenters of the present day condemn their forefathers for so doing? Yet, what right had *they*

thus to ordain, that *we* had not in similar circumstances? What if we have not *every* scruple as to *indifferent* things that they had? Still, if we have *some* as to more important points, and such as to oblige us to secede from the Establishment, we fairly conclude that they cannot justly censure *us*, without condemning *themselves* and their blessed forefathers.

“The *Established Church*, therefore, is the only quarter that with any appearance of consistency can contest the matter with us. Let us meet them on Scripture ground; only premising that I presume no one will question the validity of my brother Taylor’s ordination and my own. But to what *office* have we been ordained? To that of *Presbyters*; or, what is called in the Establishment, *the order of priesthood*. Can Presbyters, then, ordain? If they *can* ordain, then our present ordination must be valid, because *we* are Presbyters. But in the Scripture we see Presbyters *could* and *did* ordain; for was not Timothy ordained, ‘By the laying on of the hands of the *Presbytery*?’ (1 Tim. iv. 14.) Besides, the *πρεσβυτεροι* were *επισκοποι*, that is, the Presbyters or Elders were Bishops; as you may see by comparing the 17th and the 28th verses of the 20th chapter of the Acts, where the very persons that are called *Elders* in the former verse are called *Bishops* or *Overseers* (one and the same word in the original), in the latter. Hence the Apostle Peter (who, no doubt, was a *Bishop*, if ever there was one,) calls himself, in the fifth chapter of his First Epistle, at the first verse, as *Elder* or *Presbyter*; and it is evident, from the same verse, that he is addressing the *Presbyters* or *Elders*, whom he exhorts to take the *oversight* of his flock; which word in the original being *επισκοπια*, or the office of a *Bishop*; so that we must infer from the whole passage that the Presbyters were Bishops, and the Bishops were Presbyters. This must account for the Apostle’s silence about the Presbyters, when he is giving directions to Timothy concerning the Bishops and Deacons, 1 Tim. 3. Why should the Presbyters be forgotten, if they were not the same as the Bishops? Why should they be forgotten again, when Paul is writing to the Philippians? For, in the first verse of the first chapter, he salutes the *Bishops* and *Deacons*; no mention is here made of the *Presbyters*, nay, there are more Bishops than *one* in this *one* church, which plainly shews that the Bishops or Presbyters were the same. Again, when the Apostle gave directions to Titus about ordaining *Elders* or *Presbyters* (chapter i. 5), he adds some qualifications in the next verse; and then says, ‘For a *Bishop* must be blameless.’ Now, if an Elder were not a Bishop, what argument, or propriety, or connexion can there be in this reason? From the whole, then, of these Scripture testimonies, without multiplying passages to the same effect, it is evident that Presbyters are Bishops in the word of God; that Presbyters, therefore, might and did ordain;—hence the right of ordaining cannot, on *Scripture grounds*, be denied to *us* as Presbyters, who are now to engage in this solemnity. This was also the custom of the primitive church; and the nearer we approach to those early times in simplicity, the better. In those days the pastor of one congregation was the Bishop; that congregation was his diocese; the whole diocese, therefore, met for worship in one place; and they

had but one communion table for this diocese. When the congregation increased, and became too numerous for one person to minister to them in the whole pastoral office, he had other assistants, all of whom were alike Presbyters with himself, holding one and the same office as to the work of the ministry; but for distinction's sake, in point of the charge of *that people*, the original pastor, being considered as having the special care of the congregation immediately committed to him, was called the Episcopus, Bishop, or Overseer, and his assistants were called Presbyters or Elders. Just as the parochial minister of the congregation now and his curates have one and the same office in the Church in general, and can only be considered as having a different relation to that respective congregation in particular. Every one knows how corruption soon after got into the Church; and those that read ecclesiastical history cannot be ignorant that primitive simplicity was, in after ages, superseded by the pride and pomp of succeeding prelates, who, instead of feeding the flock, lorded it over God's heritage.*

"Having spoken of, and, I trust, sufficiently proved our *right* of ordination, we will proceed to consider the *necessity* of it; and take occasion, at the same time, to touch upon our late secession.

"Here I must beg you, brethren, to take a short retrospect of the revival of the power of godliness that began to take place in this kingdom above forty years ago. Every one knows that when that eminent servant of Jesus, and champion for the truth, Mr. Whitefield, came out as such a public witness, our noble patroness, that mother in Israel, the Countess of Huntingdon, boldly stepped forth with him, stood by him, and supported him with all her influence. Her Ladyship being now absent from us, I may be permitted to make a few remarks on this head, which fear of offending her delicacy would have prevented if she had been present. Disregarding her sex, her rank, her fortune, the whole world knows she has devoted all she is and all she has, for forty years and upwards, to the same glorious cause. This kingdom, as well as foreign parts, are witnesses for her. Thousands and tens of thousands have reason to bless God to eternity on her account. She has been long running her Christian race, and is not yet overcome, nor faint, but still pursuing. When I consider how far we are all outdone by this faithful, zealous, and elect lady, I am ashamed of myself.

"I need not speak of the chapels her Ladyship has built for the service of the Gospel. I need not say that when some young men were expelled from Oxford for the dreadful offences of singing, praying, and expounding the Scriptures, she opened a College where serious students were received, educated, and every way maintained at her sole expense. These, as their gifts increased, and opportunities served, were sent out from her College from time to time to preach the Gospel in various parts, to the conversion of thousands who had been sitting in darkness and the shadow of death—and, so that the Lord

* See Lord Chancellor King's Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church; Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, book 7; and Gibbon, book 15.

was with them, it was indifferent to their noble patroness and to themselves whether they preached in churches or meetings, in private houses, or on the high-ways and hedges (like their Divine Master and his apostles), in synagogues or on mountains, on sea-shores or in the school of one Tyrannus; journeying also, like them, from city to city, from town to town, and from village to village; by which means thousands now on earth, and a glorious crowd of witnesses departed in the faith, have heard and known the joyful sound. At length, when *this* house was opened for the Gospel, it is well known that the ministers who undertook it were opposed and silenced. Her Ladyship then stepped in to fill up the gap, and continue the Gospel here, where was once a synagogue of Satan. But what was the consequence? Her right was called in question, and some of the ministers sent by her to this place were cited to the *Spiritual Court*, as it is called, tried and silenced, one after another; and so, no doubt, it was to go on *most piously*, with all the rest, to the end of the chapter. What was to be done? Was the cause of God to be deserted? Were the people to be neglected, and to be scattered as sheep without a shepherd? Was this chapel, and other chapels in consequence of this, to be shut up? A *minister of a parish* says, you shall not preach here—a *bishop* says, you shall not preach here. But whether in this case we are to hearken to men, more than God, judge ye. We have received a commission for the Great Head of the Church, from the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, to go into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to every creature. Nay, we were even charged ‘in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, at the time of our ordination, to seek for Christ’s sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they might be saved through Christ for ever.’* Shall we then be confined to a single parish of perhaps a mile or two in circumference? Shall we confine the Gospel light to a few individuals, or scores, or even hundreds, when thousands and tens of thousands are in the darkness and the shadow of death, perishing for lack of knowledge? Had I ten thousand tongues, and could stand in ten thousand places at once, I would preach Jesus Christ in all of them. My life is short, is uncertain; I would work whilst it is day, before the night cometh, wherein we cannot work. Woe be unto us if we preach not the Gospel, wheresoever and whensoever we have opportunity, though all the powers of earth and hell combine against us: herein we have glorious precedents; the disciples of old were cited too before *their spiritual* courts and councils; they were threatened, imprisoned, and beaten with many stripes; they were forbid to speak any more in the name of Jesus. But were they discouraged, were they affrighted, did they forbear to preach? No; ‘they went out from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus.’ Circumstanced thus as our affairs were; one minister silenced after another, and all threatened; nothing could be done in support of the cause of God, upon our own

* See Ordination Service.

principles, but to *secede*, or peaceably withdraw from the Establishment; and continue to maintain under the Toleration Act the doctrines of the Church of England, whilst we could not in conscience submit to many of her canons, or that part of her discipline which we judge to be an human imposition on the conscience, unreasonable and unscriptural. This act of seceding, as an individual, for my own part, I had no objection to, having for some years counted it my duty to quit my parochial charge, as well as my privilege to concur with, and assist my Lady Huntingdon in her grand design of spreading the Gospel more extensively, than when circumscribed within so narrow a sphere as a single parish; whilst it is too notorious that so many ministers of the Establishment neither preach nor believe the doctrines of the Reformation; but, though they subscribe to them as a passport to ordination, or to preferment one day, make no scruple to reprobate them the next: forgetting that they were *false*, they ought not, as honest men, to subscribe to them; and, if they were *true*, they ought not, as honest men, to preach against them. Thus the blind leading the blind, and both falling into the ditch, I saw my way clearly to devote myself to the more general and extensive services of the Gospel in *this* Connexion, wherein I count it my honour to spend and to be spent, and intend (through grace) to live and to die.

"Called upon, then, in the present exigency, I dared not decline the task, however unprecedented and hazardous the undertaking might be, and however obnoxious to the bigoted of all parties; but assured of its being the Lord's cause, looking to him for his directions, and leaning upon him for support, I humbly ventured to lead the way on the seceding plan, exposed as I might be to the censure and persecution of intolerant courts, counting it the greatest blessing of my life that I had the honour of being instrumental not only in defence of the Gospel in general, but in this place (to say nothing of the various places besides), where otherwise, humanly speaking, you must have been deprived of it. Thus, my dear brethren, I have endeavoured clearly to state the whole matter before you, and to obviate every objection; I confess it has been unpremeditated upon the whole; but since I came into the chapel it struck me forcibly, that upon this occasion it was proper, and indeed expedient, to inform you not only of the nature and necessity of the secession, but of all the other steps I have taken notice of leading to it, and consequent upon it; and this plainly and explicitly, in order to justify our proceedings herein in the sight of God and man. Trusting, therefore, my attempt to do it has been attended with conviction to your minds, and requesting your forgiveness for taking up so much of your time on a subject wherein so insignificant a person as myself is immediately concerned, having never before had such a *public* call for it, we will proceed to the further business before us."

Mr. Wills then engaged in prayer suitable to the ordination immediately to take place, wherein he prayed the Lord, who was ascended up on high, and gives gifts unto men, particularly pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, that

He would be graciously pleased to endue these young persons, now to be set apart to the work of the ministry, with the gifts and grace of the Holy Spirit, that they might not only be privileged with the laying on of hands, but that a Divine unction might be poured out upon them; making them able ministers of the New Testament, not suffering them to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, nor shunning to declare the whole counsel of God, but wise to win souls, and abundantly successful in whatever part of the vineyard they may be called to labour, determining, through grace, to spend and be spent in the Redeemer's service; concluding his prayer in words to this effect—"Lord! without thee we cannot go, but let thy presence be with us, and we will go. Here, in the face of this congregation, we dedicate afresh our bodies, souls, and spirits to thy service. Bless, O bless us with simplicity and faithfulness, with zeal and success! and thou shalt have all the praise and glory, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, now and for evermore. Amen."

Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor standing together, each of them took a Bible from the communion table, where they had been previously placed, and proceeded to the laying on of hands on the head of each candidate according to seniority. Two of the young men approaching the communion rails, kneeled down, when Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor, with the Bibles in their hands, advanced, and each in succession addressed to the person kneeling before him the following words, putting the Bible into his hands:—"Take thou authority to preach the word of God, and to administer his appointed ordinances, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Two others then knelt down, and the same ceremony was repeated, till all received their designation. The whole was a scene of such impressive solemnity as has hardly ever been witnessed, and was attended with a display of great piety and ability in the ministers engaged: and evident marks of attention, devotion, and satisfaction in the people assembled.

Mr. Taylor then gave out the last verse of the 108th hymn—

"Give reward of grace and glory."

The words "Bless, O bless them," were sung with great life, and attended with uncommon power, every person seeming to join heartily in the petition, and singing them over repeatedly with the most fervent spirit of prayer.

Mr. Wills then, from the pulpit, addressed the ministers, standing round the communion rails before him, in a most able and judicious charge, which was grounded on St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy, first epistle, 4th chapter, 16th verse—"Take

heed unto thyself, and to thy doctrines; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

The charge being ended, and it being now two o'clock, the service having already taken up five hours (though the utmost eagerness of attention and solemnity in the congregation continued to the last), it was thought expedient to defer the sermon, which was to have been preached by Mr. Taylor, till the evening; and to dismiss the people for the present, with the usual benediction, after singing the 287th hymn:—

" Blessings for ever on the Lamb
Who bore the curse for wretched man," &c.

The communion was immediately after administered to those that remained, the young ministers receiving first, then the congregation. Thus concluded the whole service on this most solemn occasion; wherein much of the presence of the Lord was experienced by the people in general, many blessings were bestowed by the great Bishop and Head of the Church, and all acknowledged it to have been *one of the days of the Son of Man*, never to be forgotten by them to all eternity.

CHAPTER LII.

Hospital of Etwall, and School of Repton—Lady Huntingdon interested about those Institutions—Rev. Mr. Cotton—Lady Gerard—Correspondence of Lady Huntingdon with the Guardians—Letters from Lord Chesterfield and Lord Huntingdon—Letter to Mr. Cotton from Lady Huntingdon—Queries relative to the Charity—Rev. Cradock Glascott presented to the Living of Hatton Leigh—Mr. Ireland—Letters from Lady Huntingdon to Mr. Glascott—His Illness and Death.

THE abuses which had long existed in the Hospital of Etwall and the Free School of Repton, in the county of Derby, attracted the notice of Lady Huntingdon, who set herself vigorously to effect a reformation to these valuable institutions. To this she was instigated, amongst others, by Lady Gerard, then in a declining state of health, who was excluded from any active share in the charity, on account of being a Roman Catholic. The hospital and school were founded by Sir John Port, of Etwall, in Derbyshire; which Sir John Port left three daughters

co-heiresses: Elizabeth, the eldest, married Sir Thomas Gerard, of Bryn, in Lancashire; Dorothy, the second daughter, George, Earl of Huntingdon; and Margaret, the third daughter, Sir Thomas Stanhope, ancestor of the Earl of Chesterfield. The hospital and school were endowed with above 500*l.* per annum, and the said three families appointed governors by the last will and testament of the said Sir John Port, and by letters patent, granted by King James the First.

The Rev. Mr. Cotton, of Etwall, who was associated with Lords Chesterfield and Huntingdon for the purposes of that trust, the Gerard family being excluded on account of being Roman Catholics, was a connexion of the Shirley family. Lady Huntingdon's first cousin, Robert, sixth Earl Ferrers, brother of her Ladyship's Chaplain, the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, married his sister, the youngest daughter of Rowland Cotton, of Etwall. Lady Gerard died August 20, 1782, three months after Lady Huntingdon's first application was addressed to Lord Chesterfield. Her Ladyship's correspondence with Lords Chesterfield and Huntingdon, and the Rev. Mr. Cotton, is full of interest, and exhibits the great benevolence of her disposition—her humanity and love of justice—as well as the perpetual activity of her mind amidst her many and great labours.

Letter from Lady Huntingdon to Lord Chesterfield:—

“College, May 8th, 1782.

“My Lord,—Not having the honour to be personally known to your Lordship, I must be as much obliged to your candour as I shall certainly ever be to your justice. The liberty I now take is the effect of many applications made to me, relative to the charities of the Hospital of Etwall and the School of Repton, your Lordship being a joint-guardian with Lord Huntingdon and Mr. Cotton, of Etwall, for the purposes of that trust, the Gerard family being excluded their active share in it as Roman Catholics, and the law having, on that account, substituted the Cotton family to their present care of it. Great abuses to the poor most certainly do subsist, and on that account Lady Gerard has sent repeated requests to me, entreating my little, but utmost, interest with your Lordship and my son, that these abuses might be inquired into. I informed my son of this, whose delicacy to your Lordship, with my own, has prevented anything being done till previously your approbation could be obtained. As my son had resolved on these conditions only he could act, and as in perfect concurrence with your Lordship, and thus I now become your Lordship's petitioner as well as his for those poor who are the suffering subjects of my request—a true and faithful representation being made, I am assured your Lordship's voice will not be wanting for a full examination into the conduct of a charity, which, with proper care, might be made one of the noblest in the kingdom, according to its original institution, for the poor, disabled day-labourers in the Hospital, and the education of poor boys at the

School, who would otherwise be left without the possible chance of instruction. Should your Lordship, united with my son and Mr. Cotton, only agree to the inquiry, it might be taken without difficulty, or any great expense to the charity, by the appointment of a proper person to examine the leases upon the estate, together with the very large sums of money that have been and are at present yearly received, without benefit to the charity. This, and the yearly disbursements, justly laid before the trust for their joint information, and at one view only, would prove the importance of the suggestion, and establish the necessity of some new regulation. Could I but assure that excellent person, Lady Gerard (whose death is but too soon expected), that your Lordship and my son, with the proper application to Mr. Cotton, as the substitute of that family, have agreed that this affair should be examined into, my own satisfaction would receive double pleasure, with double thanks to your Lordship from myself, and her Ladyship also.—I am, my Lord, &c.
 “S. HUNTINGDON.”

The noble Earl thus candidly replied:—

“Eythorpe, May 9th, 1782.

“Madam,—I received by yesterday’s post the honour of your Ladyship’s letter. I am ashamed to say, that though I have had many opportunities of putting poor men and boys into the Hospital of Etwall and School of Repton, I am entirely ignorant of the nature of those charities, and of the funds by which they are supported. The kind and benevolent solicitude your Ladyship expresses that the poor objects of either of those charities may not suffer from negligence or abuse, does your Ladyship the highest honour; and I shall be very happy to coincide with your wishes in anything which may tend to accomplish so desirable an end. I shall, therefore, be ready to join with Lord Huntingdon and the Cotton family in any inquiry that may be necessary. As I have not any acquaintance upon the spot whom I can recommend to examine the leases and accounts of the charities, I wish, when your Ladyship writes to Lord Huntingdon upon this subject, you would desire him or Mr. Cotton to appoint such a person as they may think capable of executing the office with diligence and disinterestedness. Should your Ladyship wish to do me the honour of writing to me again upon this subject, I must trouble you to direct to me—Shelbrook Hall, near Doncaster, Yorkshire. Lady Chesterfield feels herself much flattered by your kind remembrance of her, and begs to present her compliments to your Ladyship.—I have the honour to be, Madam, your Ladyship’s most obedient and faithful, humble servant,

“CHESTERFIELD.”

Her Ladyship lost no time in addressing the second trustee, the Rev. W. Cotton, of Etwall, Derbyshire:—

“College, May 17, 1782.

“Rev. Sir,—The friendship which for so many years subsisted mutually in your family and mine, would make me consider an application to you (though personally unknown) as the still remaining fruit of that

respect which time cannot lessen by their loss, and which, on the present occasion, becomes so much due to you. Various representations of the state of the charities of Etwall Hospital and Repton School have been made to me, and in a particular manner from that excellent person, Lady Gerard, for whose family you are the appointed substitute for one part of that trust, united with Lord Chesterfield and Lord Huntingdon. The examination into this most important relief for the poor, intended by the noble benefactor, and, according to its original institution, to be justly and properly attended to, as his meaning seems hitherto but too little regarded; and I have the pleasure now of assuring you the full consent of Lord Chesterfield and my son is obtained for the most legal and exact inquiry into every circumstance belonging to these charities, and, with your concurrence in this matter, the whole affair may be conducted with the most unreserved faithfulness. I have proposed to Lord Chesterfield and Lord Huntingdon that some very proper person should be appointed and sent down to inspect the leases, together with the real condition of the estate, by which its essential value may be known, all which they approved; and I think I may venture to say, my son and Lord Chesterfield will account themselves happy that an active part in this may so honourably belong to you, by any preparations needful for this most useful and excellent inquiry, as your honour and justice will suffer no private interest to prevail, or the state of any facts to be concealed from the legal inspection intended universally to be made. A plan well laid will render the execution immediate and easy; and as I have always believed a degree of faithful care would make this one of the most noble private charities in the kingdom, so does it become the privilege of all concerned to yield every friendly aid for that purpose. Hoping to hear your sentiments on this subject, I remain, Reverend Sir, your obedient, humble servant,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

“P.S.—I must believe it immediately needful that an actual survey of the whole estate should be taken, as that will become the foundation for all future improvements, as well as the certain and best correction for neglect or unfaithfulness.”

The letter of Lord Huntingdon to his excellent mother on this subject, is as follows:—

“London, May 18th, 1782.

“I am happy you have put in such forwardness an inquiry into the state of Etwall charities. As Lord Chesterfield promises to concur with me in all steps that might be taken to that end, I request your Ladyship and Lady Gerard to take such measures as may appear necessary, and I will subscribe to them all. Your intention of applying to Mr. W—— for an able lawyer and manager seems a proper beginning; and I desire your Ladyship not to give yourself the trouble of consulting me upon every occasion, but to be confident of my entire concurrence and support. After these assurances, I flatter myself, dear Madam, you will proceed in this business without further delay, &c., &c. Adieu, my dear Madam, and be assured of the affection of your dutiful son,

(Signed)

“HUNTINGDON.”

Lady Huntingdon now thought it right to send her letter to Mr. Cotton, enclosed to Lord Chesterfield, whom she thus addresses:—

“College, May 21st, 1782.

“My Lord,—I must, with great truth, assure your Lordship, that the honour done me by your Lordship’s letter, with your noble and ready disposition to have the rights of the poor maintained by your Lordship’s obliging concurrence with Lord Huntingdon, has engaged my kindest respect, and, from the great relief given to my mind by such an act of justice to the oppressed poor, the strongest impressions of gratitude to your Lordship. I have the honour of inclosing a copy of a letter to Mr. Cotton, hoping for your approbation. Delicacy to his part of the trust made me venture to say your Lordship and my son would be pleased with every preparatory means for the inquiry. The want of a proper authority must make me the object (but too certainly) of supposed officiousness, and as such must have its many difficulties to me; yet your Lordship and my son being not fully acquainted with the various circumstances relative to those charities, obliges some one detached from every interest to carry forward this business coolly and faithfully. Lord Huntingdon, in consequence of your Lordship’s request, thought with me, an able lawyer, a stranger to possible influence in the county, or any concerned, seemed the most upright method for detecting the abuses as they might arise under the examination of the whole. I have wrote to one very eminent in the law, to recommend the most able person he knows, for the purpose of the fullest and freest examination of these charities; and I hope your Lordship will do me the honour to believe, that I would as certainly avoid all needless trouble to your Lordship as I would unfaithfulness to these intentions by any want of your most perfect approbation. As soon as I receive Mr. Cotton’s answer, together with the best intelligence I can obtain of the person to be employed, I shall be obliged to trouble your Lordship for any instruction you may on this occasion honour me with. I beg Lady Chesterfield will accept my most respectful compliments; and I remain, as ever, my Lord, your Lordship’s most obliged and obedient,

“S. HUNTINGDON.

“P.S.—I have, with great pleasure, assured Lady Gerard of your just and wise sentiments of this faithful inquiry, which I know her honour and respect to your Lordship will most thankfully rejoice in.”

To this letter Lord Chesterfield replied within a fortnight to the following purport:—

“Shelbrook Hall, June 5th, 1782.

“Madam,—I received a little time ago the honour of your Ladyship’s letter, and approve very much of the steps you have taken in regard to the revenues and administration of the charities of Etwall Hospital and Repton School. I have the honour of returning your Ladyship the copy of the letter you had written to the Rev. Mr. Cotton, and which, as well as I am able to judge, will have great effect in attaining the humane ends which are the sole objects of your Ladyship’s

benevolent interference on the occasion. I beg leave to repeat how happy I shall be to follow your advice and direction on the present occasion, and to unite with Lord Huntingdon in any steps either his Lordship or you think still further necessary. Lady Chesterfield begs me to present her most respectful compliments to your Ladyship.—I have the honour to be, with great truth, Madam, your Ladyship's most obedient and faithful, humble servant,

“CHESTERFIELD.”

Mr. Cotton not replying to her Ladyship's letter, she again addressed the Earl, a month after the date of the above letter:

“College, July 5th, 1782.

“My Lord,—The great honour you have done me by your confidence must oblige my utmost faithfulness for your Lordship's fullest approbation; and whatever I may want in securing this, I am sure you will give me credit that in so interesting a point with me, I could not be wanting in diligence or the most unalterable wishes for that success. The occasion of this present trouble to your Lordship arises from my having had no answer from Mr. Cotton to that letter, a copy of which I had the honour of sending your Lordship. Two reasons occur which may possibly account for this—great ignorance of the world in the neglect of respect and attention to your Lordship and my son, and the combined influence on this occasion of the master of the Hospital, who possesses the living of Etwall from Mr. Cotton; and the hope the inquiry may drop by his silence, probably engages these cautious reserves, and thus justice to the poor must end, unless your Lordship and my son resolve upon signing a letter of attorney for the lawyer and agent for this special inquiry, and after your Lordship and my son have signed it, they may wait on Mr. Cotton, with your united compliments, for the purpose of signing it also. This proper mark of respect is all that can be wanting to him as a joint trustee, having been already previously informed of all your Lordship knows; and this may be done with the utmost delicacy to Mr. Cotton, while legal justice may be thus happily secured to the poor, as I am sure I can answer for your Lordship and my son, that while that is maintained, the most temperate equity would be ever your meaning to all or any concerned. It appeared needful to me to draw up suggestions for the gentleman's information previous to the inquiry; and I thought by conveying these to your Lordship you would be possessed of the most just intelligence, and also be best prepared to judge of the answer given by him after his examination. I have made a mark for your Lordship where imposition is most suspected, and have also thrown what light I could upon the justice and advantage of this proposed measure, by the great improvement of the estate, and the just application of the large sums now in hand, for the establishment of many more poor men and scholars, and as most agreeable to the institution of their great and kind benefactor. I have been successful in obtaining Mr. Dawson, my son's principal agent, to assist (if with your approbation), as your Lordship will see by the enclosed, and who in business is the most honest and capable man I

know ; and I shall only wait your Lordship's resolutions for proceeding, as my son has requested my acting for him, in concurrence with your Lordship, and in the same confidence you so mutually honour me with, I venture to offer my sentiments with great respect in one particular—viz., that the inquiry may be made upon the *present face of things*, without any litigious measures being entered upon for past misconduct, and nothing to appear but your Lordship's and my son's for the present or future advantage of the charity, as any retrospect could serve no good end : and by avoiding it, contentions of every kind may be prevented, and Mr. Cotton unable, with any appearance of justice, to object to it. Thus the noble and benevolent case of the trust must reflect the honour so justly due to it, and the blessings and prayers of many ready to perish be for your Lordship now, and to your memory the most lasting gratitude : and I must also add (as most certainly true), the highest approbation of the most worthy and respectable characters in that county, and others also, from some connected knowledge of or interest with it. To your Lordship's commands for any better means of conducting this affair, every attention and respect, so much due, will be paid, and your pardon I must become the subject of, wherein any thing you may disapprove. If otherwise, the appointed time for this end to be most properly executed is at the general audit, which, I think, is in September, at Repton, when all are yearly obliged to make up the accounts, and all present that can be wanting for information to the gentleman intrusted with this important examination. The particular line in the law which is best calculated for this, I shall by the most diligent inquiry make, and for one eminent in character and abilities ; and by conveying the suggestions to him and his agent, they will be fully qualified to proceed for your Lordship, and Lord Huntingdon's fullest satisfaction. I am extremely sorry to tire your Lordship by so long a letter, but I thought containing at one view the several essentials must be more easy than repeated trouble, upon what might appear less such, and must be my last excuse to your Lordship. I must entreat my very best and respectful compliments to Lady Chesterfield ; and allow me to assure your Lordship, that I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's much obliged and most truly faithful, humble servant,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

This letter enclosed a paper, of which the substance will be found in the note below.*

On the subject of these charities her Ladyship consulted

* The following queries are supposed necessary, as leading instructions to the gentleman employed for an inquiry into the state of the charities of Etwall Hospital and Repton School ; and are submitted for the approbation of the Earl of Huntingdon, the Earl of Chesterfield, and the Rev. Mr. Cotton, joint trustess for these charities :

QUERY THE FIRST.

Will not a letter of attorney, empowering the agent appointed, be needful from the Earl of Huntingdon, the Earl of Chesterfield, and the Rev. Mr. Cotton, as his only proper authority for the purpose of this inquiry ; and if so, how best is this inquiry to be made ?

the Rev. Cradock Glascott; and as it was now the period of that worthy man's retirement from her Ladyship's service, we may take this opportunity of glancing at his course, and the con-

QUERY THE SECOND.

Should not the will of Sir John Port, the noble benefactor, be first examined?—and if so, in whose hands is this to be found? And should not the original intentions of this institution be kept in view through the whole inquiry, in order to be most faithfully fulfilled by the trust?

QUERY THE THIRD.

Should not the condition of the whole estate be well known, by survey or other means, to obtain its present full and certain yearly value?

QUERY THE FOURTH.

Should not the leases be separately and singly examined, with the particulars of where, how, and by whom made and let? the various terms of years subsisting under each lease? And how far the conditions appear in these leases most consistently let for the greatest benefit of those charities? or whether not possessed by under tenants, and only become the advantage of such, and not of the charities?

QUERY THE FIFTH.

Should not the present of the poor men, with their present allowances in the Hospital, and also of the poor scholars, be known, with the present regulations of both; and these, if agreeable to Sir John Port's will, observed and maintained? and whether at present a sufficient support is allowed them, in proportion to the income of the estates?

QUERY THE SIXTH.

Should not the several salaries of the masters be inquired into, and how far they have been increased since first appointed? and if this appears to be from the increase of their labour and care, and as under the universal improvement of the charities from which they receive it? and how far these may bear proportion of increase by the proportionable good arising to the poor?

QUERY THE SEVENTH.

Should not the present yearly receipts and payments be clearly separate, that whence the accumulated money arises may appear, and that the most distinctly to the trust?

QUERY THE EIGHTH.

Should not an exact account be taken of the money and various securities that exist above the yearly receipts and disbursements of these charities? and also a faithful representation made to the trustees for the proper order of its appointment, agreeable to the tenor and meaning of Sir John Port's will?

QUERY THE NINTH.

To what purpose is this money kept in hand, if not for the improvement and increase of these charities, for which, by it, every advantage must only be meant?

QUERY THE TENTH.

Should not special care be taken to provide the means necessary that the leases may be let to run out? as it is reasonably supposed the estate might be more than doubled in income to the charities, for the general blessing to those intended objects of their noble and kind benefactor's benevolence.

QUERY THE ELEVENTH.

From the money in hand, and the present yearly income of the estate, how many poor men may be added to the Hospital, and poor scholars to the School? Ought not a calculation to be made, from the falling in of the leases, how many poor men and scholars may be supported, with an addition to the poor men's pay, which at present is unequal to their support? And is it not a matter of consideration for the trustees to examine how far it may be proper to separate the master from accepting any other employ, and by adding to his salary a suf-

nexion between his labours and the great design of Lady Huntingdon.

Mr. Glascott was ordained Deacon at Christchurch, Oxford, in 1765; served the curacy of Cheveley in Berkshire for two years; was dismissed; and his dismissal introduced him to Lady Huntingdon, by whom he was immediately admitted as assistant chaplain, and in whose Connexion he continued to labour till 1781. He was then presented to the vicarage of Hatherleigh in Devonshire, by James Ireland, Esq. of Brislington, near Bristol. A long and interesting correspondence between Mr. Glascott and his venerable patroness occurred on this promotion, from which we have selected such of her Ladyship's letters as appeared most expressive of her feeling towards him, and the subject of his charge.

Her Ladyship had alluded in a letter of the 7th December to a report that Mr. Glascott was verging into new principles of religion; his reply we have not; but here follows her Ladyship's rejoinder:—

“ College, Dec. 14th, 1781.

“ My dear Sir,—As I intend the account of the travelling ministers to be made up and inserted at large for the satisfaction of the people, I will beg you to inform me of your expenses, as those must be transmitted to our London Committee, for my orders to them for the payment of those several demands, as consequent upon those ministers on their occasional services. Bath, I find, has most nobly enlarged this fund; may the Lord repay them a thousand fold into their own bosoms; and, given with such hearts of liberality, I doubt not but we shall find many blessings added to the work through their means. The great and unspeakable loss I sustain by the new engagements of even faithful and still beloved friends (Mr. Glascott had now entered on his living), obliges me to secure more ministers for the services of our great and increasing work, which being more general, become less observable, yet in new assemblies not sufficiently established, employs not only our faithful but expensive cares. My wish was to have continued your salary for your life, and to have done so I should have counted my honour as well as one of the greatest pleasures of my life. The next greatest must be now to yield any occasional help to those many difficulties that lie before you. This I

efficient support for his more faithful care in the inspection and absolute charge of these charities after the present master's decease?

QUERY THE TWELFTH.

Ought not the money in the master's hands to be known, and how much that is above the certain yearly disbursements he is called upon yearly to make?

These queries fully and explicitly answered, there must conclusively follow that way, by various proposals made to the trustees for the present improvement of those charities, and for the future regulations and permanent establishment of them.

(Signed)

S. HUNTINGDON.

see with many uneasy moments for you, and which you, from inexperience, cannot properly judge of. Repairs, establishment of a family, furniture, &c., &c., upon only the expected justice of a starving poor people, that the heart could never suffer to distress or ruin, unite in my many secret sorrowful feelings for one I must ever so truly love, that did I not hope you would still make me (poor and worthless as I am) the friend of your difficulties, my sorrows must be increased; and this, added to the possible restraints you must be under (whatever policy for the present means to conceal) makes every cloud hide you more and more out of my sight. In spite of all your hopes and mine for your future services, the thousand exigences of your situation must leave your own kind will so much out of the question as never for me to dispute your kindest purposes, and that while your chains only obliged you to feel their power by the affectionate freedom of your heart towards us. The time you can most easily give our dear friends at Bath, you will assure me of as soon as you can, that no sudden difficulties may arise to other congregations by any obligations you may be under, unexpectedly to fulfil. The circumstance of your curate's necessity of staying, seems the possible means to accomplish your first intention; yet so many new and complicated cares on such occasions follow, that I must not call it disappointment. Your kind letter from Exeter I received. Begging every blessing for your own precious soul, and through the great tribulation we must pass to have our robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, you and I may rejoice eternally together in the abundant glory free grace has bestowed, and which must be the everlasting song of, my very dear Sir, your for ever faithful and affectionate friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

“College, Dec. 25, 1781.

“My dear Friend,—Your sorrowful heart has not been hid from me; for four days and nights the most painful clouds I ever felt rested on my spirit on your account, and many times in the day I could not refrain from tears, or help breaking out to Lady Anne, ‘O! poor dear Glascott, how sore must be his trouble—what can be the matter?’ This from supposing all was well as you had informed me, and as the Bishop made no terms with you, and I thought I had freely given you up, hoping and believing the Lord would faithfully take care for both you and me; but in many earnest prayers for you I had besought the Lord that *He* by his own Spirit might witness, and *that only* by *Himself*, that you might be satisfied. As I thought (or at least feared), the matter had not been deep enough, and yet remained a temptation too powerful for the leanings of your own heart to be subdued short of the Spirit of truth, which only can lead us into all that holy and righteous will, which separates us from ourselves in all his Divine purposes for us.

“Feel justly for me but one moment, and you will best understand my grief, not of self or for it, but pangs for the sinking glory of this reformation, and for you so chosen an instrument thus buried in that poor customary province where the hypocrite and all those without are who slumber in perpetual death. These alarms were not my own

giving. You must remember the many who have left me—Romaine, Townsend, Jesse, De Courcy, &c., &c. Why not alike anxious? You need but look about, and you will see from them no cause now subsisting why I ever could have one care but to wish them well, and as strangers to *that* point on which the prospects of real good could arise, or that sufficient devotedness that proved the glorious freedom of grace to be truly theirs. Thus account for my being stirred up by Mr. Ireland; had he been my father, my brother, or my child, he could not, or ought not to have ever felt my resentment too much, and should he ever see it in this light he could only see me a poor but faithful servant to my dearest and best of Masters, my all and all of comfort, joy for myself, and the thousand times ten thousand that now rejoice in his eternal salvation.

“Farewell, my dear Friend; may the faithful Shepherd of Israel keep you day and night, and, lest you slumber again, raise you renewed in strength, is the affectionate prayer of your faithful, but unworthy friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.

“P.S.—I shall order ten guineas for your travelling charges, or more should it not appear to your wishes.

“I highly approve secrecy on this subject. Regard no reproach on this subject. Truth will be the girdle of your loins. With this, Hell with all its associates must fall before you. Much good may yet follow these unintelligible Providences. ‘What I do now you know not, but you shall hereafter.’”

Her Ladyship wrote again on the following day:—

“Christmas Day.

“My dear Friend,—Since I wrote the former letter the agitation of my mind on your account, together with the obligation I am under for your unsought openness to me, does each moment engage my most faithful care for your honour in the present situation, and putting myself in this situation of mind. If you ever truly mean resignation, it ought to be done immediately, and that by going to the Bishop, and in fidelity of heart, saying truly as it is, and that the oath of perpetual residence would not suffer you that peace of conscience so positively against the express word of God, when ordered by the Lord Jesus Christ that you should go preach his Gospel unto all the world, and so suitably maintained by your ordination when you entered the Church; and to mention however unstable it might seem, yet as an honest man your obligations to conscience rendered it the only means to ease of mind, yet yielding up such a certainty of comfortable support to yourself without any views of any interest or gain, must but prove to him how much better you preferred that conscience void of offence to God and man, than all things else. Any delays on this subject will admit of conclusions unworthy of you. It may be said and believed why not sooner, and if ever wrong it must be upon the oath being taken, and thus appear trifling with that uprightness of mind, that immediate conviction ought to have obliged you to. This cannot be answered faithfully, as so immutable a truth requires open, just, and honourable

principles. By admitting no delays, you must have double honour in the esteem of wise and good men, and when a man's ways please the Lord, he makes his enemies to be at peace ; and what can please God more than yielding to his pure, wise, and holy reproof so speedily given, and his truth engaged no man forsaking anything, but he pledges his own a hundred fold. Should you, from the severity of the Lord's voice against you in the few months you would continue, how bitter might it be ? and then losing that present testimony of your honest and most disinterested conduct. Burn this, if these arguments are rejected ; be assured it is my own soul given to you on this subject. Your difficulty to Mr. Ireland's objections will be but more and more increased by delay, and to live pampered and perplexed for a season with the Lord's rod held over your head can have no meaning but what deserves the name of weakness and a divided heart, and at best, the false mother's portion. Mr. Ireland also would leave you without excuse as he has essentially agreed in any such supposed consequences if continued. This letter was wrote the day after the former, and as that being not enough explicit to satisfy my mind, I here deliver my own soul, begging the Lord to bless it so far as it appears to your whole *mind His will*, and as ever affectionately yours,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

The substance of Mr. Glascott's reply may be gathered from the following letter : he did not resign :—

“College, Jan. 11th, 1782.

“My dear Sir,—My private judgment your friendly openness extorted from me, and I lament it lest you should conclude from justice, any coolness might be occasioned by that preference given by you to your choice and sphere of action ; but I must ever hereafter call upon you for that uprightness due to my meanings for you, and separate from any motives whatever, but those wholly relative to yourself. This may be well proved, that disgust for me has never been felt by you ; and while hurt extremely by your concealed conduct, your repeated declarations so openly that in principle and judgment you was a Dissenter—and the most warmly urging the secession. The sudden change promoted by such a man surprised me, but without any reproach of mine to you. The leaving me and the work of God at a time when I was supporting your right, and deserting me in a way not kind to an old friend, surrounded by various difficulties, had not one expostulation with you on the subject. The repeated assurances to others on many occasions that no restraints should bind you, that you would refuse every obligation to residence, and then taking an oath finally to bind the conscience of every honest man (and as I am told hardly ever tendered to others), and this while under your hand declaring repeatedly nothing should prevent your services among us—this also has been done without even reminding you, lest from me any oppressive care through me might arise upon your mind, and indeed I felt such tender pity for the certain consequences of such a step for you, that all my indignation was to one whom I thought to be the wicked contriver of the whole, and of every future misery you could sustain ; and thus is my most truly disinterested friendship

and faithful regard for you, to my own soul fully, fully acquitted, and that to the uttermost. Wonder not then if your last letter did occasion every surprise a mind could be filled with. Your sentiments differing with respect to the *immediate* resignation had no effect, as I conceived that kind of judicious honour due to yourself you might not so clearly see from those remaining partialities of your own will, nor also feel so deeply the obligation of God's voice, 'Turn, turn, ye at my reproof;' so as to seek immediate relief where only every faithful soul can find it. But allow me to say, the prevarication relative to your oath did more than amaze me with grief. Can it be possible the full engagement made by your supposed choice and will, and calling on God so to help you, can admit of reserves, interest alone or pleasure made for yourself or others? You are a captive of your own making to a superior that denies that God you swore to. Your engaged subjection to him you never can depart from and be just; your arguments upon this subject are as affecting to me in order to avoid the force of this truth as words can make them. You say, 'the civility and candour of the Bishop you having nothing to fear from;' and is it possible to clothe perjury with further imposition and with hypocrisy, and suppose, because not disputed by the Bishop, the oath demands less by this means for its real fulfilment? Where is truth or justice fled? Your next argument is, that a wicked man (the late vicar) was perjured, as by not residing he was, and therefore seems more reconcilable, and, indeed, as a thing of course thus to be allowed; it is well if that man's perjury stopped there, for he that can forswear himself for ease, will certainly do it for interest. You then conclude, 'if it does not answer in such a time, you will return to your itineracy.' You *cannot* hope God will withdraw his charges of truth when upon you, and so lie hardened down to all his sweet and merciful calls of conscience, and in that way indulge your own will and ease with that of others in this matter. No, no; 'the servant that knows his Master's will and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes;' and this shall stand while the earth exists, however you or I may believe it. You seem to think too incautiously of our Saviour's power over his house, when you say you *will then* itinerate. By what power? Is life your own? Is grace and gifts your own? Is his authority in your hands? Can *He* want the dregs of an unsubdued will for his services, when you shall choose to give them? O! no; the very idea makes me tremble. I again say with the most faithful appeal to the Trier of the hearts and reins, that no one single thought but the safety of your own soul, and the important use your dear Master may yet make of your labours, I say this wholly is *all*, that my heart feels in this matter for you. As to myself, many more than I actually want, and supplies sufficient in your character is to be obtained. I wish I could rejoice in such, from that blessed simplicity and honour for our dear Lord (I can never forget) you have been so honoured by; but I thank the adorable High Priest of our profession, those I have seem to answer our present wants abundantly, and in the present fires I can praise him. Should my heavy and bitter persecutor remain inflexible, the stands for the gospel now, and in future, has all I can want, while my poor little all

belongs in the Lord's hands for its support and best purposes. Thus, who stays or who goes (by the Lord's appointment), is not my care. He has ready many standing idle in the market-place, and in every hour of my days here, he can graciously say to some soul whom he will make faithful, 'Go, work in this my vineyard;' and while it is *only* his, I will expect labourers so sent; and as *my whole* trust is there, I shall not be confounded, and though drove, persecuted, afflicted, and tormented by evil men, and the rage of the world and the devil, still, still will I say, 'My sure trust is in thee, O Lord;' and thus till his faithfulness fails, as the mount Zion, I shall not be moved. I cannot love you better, I cannot wish you better, I cannot pray more faithfully for my own soul, than for your safety. More, mere human fidelity cannot say; and in the truth of these I remain, my dear Sir, your most true, old and faithful friend,

"S. HUNTINGDON.

"P.S.—No one shall be ordered to supersede you at Bath or the Mulberry Gardens, should you choose it. Nothing but from the impressions of your own conscience ought to forbid every mark of former regard to you from myself; and thus farewe^{ll} and farewell!"

From Mr. Glascott's first institution to the living of Hatherleigh he was the resident minister of that parish; and, what he considered a singular mercy, was never prevented from performing Divine service one Sunday during a period of nearly fifty years. When he had attained his eighty-fifth year, he was able to perform the duties of his church (in which there were three services on the Lord's day), as well as he could twenty years before. And at that period he wrote, "So abundant is the goodness and mercy of God to his unworthy servant in the decline of life, that we are favoured in our worshipping assemblies with evident tokens of the Divine presence and blessing."

Mr. Glascott was favoured with a happy, useful, and green old age, exempt from the infirmities which are usually experienced at that advanced period of life, and retaining his faculties with strength and vigour of mind to the age of eighty-nine. Mr. Glascott enjoyed remarkably good health until a short time before his death, when he was attacked with the influenza, at that time so prevalent; but was supported through his sufferings and tedious nights by his firm reliance on the Saviour, whose blood and righteousness he had preached for the lengthened period of *sixty-six years!* and was enabled to rejoice in the near approach of death, in the assured hope of being carried in safety and comfort through the dark valley. It pleased God so far to restore Mr. Glascott to health again, that he preached and administered the Sacrament on the Sunday before his death; and never did he speak with more clearness and energy in advocating salvation *by Christ alone*; and related

with feeling, the comfort and joy that he had experienced from resting his hopes on that foundation in his late illness. Mr. Glascott retained his senses to the last, and to the last expressed the same comfort and certainty, that he knew all was well, and that his Redeemer lived. He fell asleep in Jesus on Thursday the 18th of August, 1830, at the vicarage house, Hatherleigh, Devon; where his memory will be long cherished by his parishioners, who, as well as the inhabitants of the neighbourhood generally, testified their respect for him by a general mourning.

CHAPTER LIII.

Mr. Madan's "Thelypthora"—Chapel at Bootle—Anecdote of Mr. Romaine—Mr. Whitridge—Mr. Daniel Gibbons—Mr. Daniel Gray—Letter from Lady Huntingdon to the Trustees of the Chapel at Kendal—Letter from Lady Huntingdon to Mr. Gray—Mrs. Paul—Chapel at Hereford—Correspondence relative to it with Mrs. Paul and others—Chapels at Whitehaven, Weymouth, Sheffield, Newark—Correspondence relating to them—Letter to the Congregation at Berkhamstead—Letters to Mr. Ellis and Mr. Blake—Chapel at Birmingham—Mr. Bradford—Lord Douglass—Lady Huntingdon invited to Brussels—Escapes assassination—Death of Lord Douglass—Letter from Lady Huntingdon relative to Brussels—Her Difference with Mr. Wills—Preface to a Volume of Sermons.

THE late Rev. Martin Madan, of the Lock, was now about to publish his celebrated work, entitled "Thelypthora; or, a Treatise on Female Ruin." While it was in the press, Lady Huntingdon wrote to him, to beg he would suppress it, and added, "that she could send him a paper signed by above three thousand persons, with the same request." Mr. Madan replied, "that if there were six thousand names, it should not prevent the publication of his book." At the request of Lady Huntingdon, Mr. Wills wrote an answer, entitled "Remarks on Polygamy," &c., in which he scholastically and strenuously appears an advocate for and defender of that holiness without which no man can see the Lord. The publication of this singular work caused Mr. Madan to sink into deserved oblivion, and called forth a host of refutations.

But Lady Huntingdon's attention was soon called from a subject so painful, to something of a more pleasing nature. The

preaching of Mr. Romaine and Mr. De Courcy, who were occasionally introduced into the parish church at Bootle in Cumberland, by Mr. Parke and Mr. Whitridge, both natives of the parish, caused considerable sensation, and was instrumental in the awakening of many. But those faithful ministers were not often allowed to officiate in that temple of orthodoxy, scarcely ever without interruption.

It was on one of these excursions to Bootle, being invited to preach, that the churchwardens observed him pull hard at the old pulpit door, without being able to open it; he immediately suspected that a blacksmith in the parish, who was a great enemy to the Gospel, had played them a trick, and stepping up to the clerk desired him to sing a long psalm, whilst he ran to get pincers and a hammer to open the pulpit door. This was done with as little noise as possible; and Mr. Romaine got admission to the pulpit and preached, to the great edification of the people.

The Gospel being thus excluded from the parish church, a dwelling-house and then a barn were successively registered for public worship, in which the Rev. Daniel Gibbons, then stationed at Ulverstone, one of Lady Huntingdon's students, and the Rev. G. Burton, of Lancaster, occasionally officiated. Their exertions happily terminated in the erection of a very commodious meeting-house in 1780, at the expense of the above Mr. Whitridge, who, at his death endowed it with the interest of 1000*l*. It was opened on the 30th of July the same year, on which occasion Mr. Gibbons preached a very excellent discourse, which was published under the title of "*A true Guide to Happiness.*"*

The first minister settled over this congregation was Mr.

* The dedication to the work touches on our subject:—

"To JOSEPH WHITRIDGE, ESQ.

"Sir—The Sermon which here claims your patronage and protection, was preached in a place which, under God owes its existence to your generosity. As the *cross of Christ* is the believer's glory in earth and heaven, I trust, Sir, you will ever esteem it your highest honour to countenance and encourage a work which, in any measure, recommends THIS to lost sinners. Had this sermon contained anything repugnant to the plain revealed Word of God, or contrary to the doctrinal articles of the Church of England, it would have been highly criminal in me to offer it to your protection. The degeneracy of the present age, from the doctrinal articles of the Church is truly deplorable, and loudly calls upon all lovers of our Lord Jesus in sincerity to endeavour at the extirpation of these Arian, Socinian, and Pelagian tenets, which have been substituted in their stead. The world can testify that you, Sir, have not been backward in seeking these valuable ends. May the Father of Mercies crown all your pious endeavours with abundant success! and that you may evermore rejoice in that adorable Saviour, in whom all fulness dwells, is the desire of, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

"D. GIBBONS."

Derbyshire, one of the students from Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca. The Rev. Daniel Gray, another of the students, was likewise stationed here in 1782. He eventually became minister of the congregation, and died in that office. His first pastoral charge was at Kendal, to which he was ordained in April, 1782. His son succeeded him at Bootle, and preached to the people about two or three years. He afterwards took orders in the Established Church.*

The late Mrs. Paul, relict of the Dean of Cashel, and sister

* Her Ladyship thus writes to the trustees of the Kendal meeting on the subject of Mr. Gray:—

“Whereas my student Gray, has communicated to me a call from your congregation, as wishing to have him a settled pastor over them, I take this opportunity to inform you, that he has left it to me for my agreement to the proposal, thus acting faithfully, as having not yet accomplished his full time at the College; and also seems only disposed to do what he believes shall most fully satisfy him in what is the will of God concerning him. The regard he claims from me by his upright and diligent services in the Gospel must render every future prospect for him an important care with me. For these reasons, I wish him to be ordained in this Connexion, and to be continued as universally serviceable as possible. For the advantages of all the congregations, a rotation of the most able ministers among us is intended. These, though severally answerable to fulfil their engagements to the first call, yet will be expected to serve in the intervals of time in any dark place around them; and in case sickness or temporal affairs prevent their immediate service, all ordained in this Connexion will be entitled to a brother minister's help for them, or a student from the College for their assistance; and in order that the whole congregation may be fully satisfied of their principles, a confession of their minister's faith may be read publicly, and kept by them, to prevent heresies or false doctrine creeping in among them, which in this our day, so miserably abound. We are not anxious to settle any over congregations, their labours universally being so blessed, and they also having a certain home they are ever most welcome to. It ought, therefore, to appear a call not of interest for themselves or ease, but a clear call of God for the faithful dispensation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to precious and immortal souls, and those whose hearts are engaged with zeal and faithfulness to unite with such ministers for the spread of the glorious Immanuel's praises must and will give such servants of God all encouragement in their active labours for that end; otherwise they sit down, grow cold, and dry, and careless, and in the end the life and power of the Gospel ceases. I should not like to part with any brought up by me, unless all was provided for their greatest usefulness in the Gospel both on account of the comfort of their own souls and those of the congregation they watch over. If this is read to the people and approved, and any proposals come, occasioning no division in the congregation of Kendal (and which I could never have *any* thing on *any* account to do with), you may depend upon a final answer from me united with Mr. Gray's resolutions.

“And now, commending the several trustees, with the faithful in Christ Jesus belonging to the congregation of Kendal, to the God of all grace for every present, future, and eternal blessing, I remain, yours and their faithful and willing servant in the Gospel of peace and love,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

“College, April 12th, 1782.

We also subjoin her Ladyship's letter to Mr. Gray, written some weeks before the above:—

“College, Feb. 21, 1782.

“I have received your letter, and had I not been ill should have answered it sooner. Your various trials and temptations are merciful signs of the Lord's

to Dr. Hawkins, Bishop of Raphoe, being resident some time at Worcester, removed to Hereford, where she was instrumental in directing the hopes of a few to the great concerns of an eternal world. Lady Huntingdon immediately turned her attention thither, and established a chapel in the latter city, which involved her Ladyship in considerable difficulties. The fol-

tender care to preserve you simple and humble, and so best to qualify you for that highest earthly honour—that embassy of peace to the guilty souls of sinners. Have courage, then; think not so great a calling must not have its proportionable difficulties and dangers, but the faithful that endure through the great tribulation, will be well paid by entering their dear Master's joy. Never forget those words of the only faithful and true witness, 'He that will lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same *shall save it*: but he that *seeketh* to save his life, shall lose it.' There is no medium; either be like the world seeking the world, or be Christian ministers devoted in heart and life for his glory. This will only cause the salt to keep its seasoning properly, and if it is ever lost it is neither good for Canaan's land or even the dunghill of this miserable world—it will be cast out of both. Thus be satisfied to bear the Cross, and by it you will learn to live above the world while in it, and thus enjoying the blessed smiles of his countenance, you will be able *truly* to say, it is 'better than life itself.' My heart is truly rejoiced to hear of our dear Bootle friends. I purpose to have you in Wiltshire, soon as you wish to see your relations there. As to Kendal, I by that means shall hear from you of their wishes, and consistent to their wishes I would endeavour to serve them; but I by no means approve your accepting or hearing of anything till I see you. Mr. Wills's secession from the Church (for which he is the most highly honoured of all from the noble and disinterested motives that engaged his faithful and honest conscience for the Lord's unlimited services), brings about an ordination of such students as are alike disposed to labour in the plan, and appointed for those congregations. The method of these appears the best calculated for the comfort of the students, and to serve the congregations most usefully, and is contrived to prevent any bondage to the people or minister. The objections to the Dissenters' plan are many, and the Church even more; that secession means the neutrality between both, and so materially offensive to neither. My desire is that no step be taken on any account till you see me, as we have many congregations, and other large ones desiring to stand now in connection, so that till you are fully apprised of all the advantages that may arise, and faithfully fulfilling your honest engagements for the peace and comfort of your own mind, I never can agree you should take any steps prior to that of the most deliberate consideration, the want of which has brought many instances of the want of God's visible blessings upon them, who might have 'run well,' and been honoured of God and man among us. At your request, I give you a fortnight's warning *from the time* you receive this, and expect you then to leave Bootle for the College, as another student will either arrive or you meet him on the road, and I shall appoint you accordingly for Wiltshire, and the remove of the present students who now labour there. May the Lord whom you serve bless your coming in as he has blessed your going out, and keep your heart free from every purpose; but, like Caleb, following him fully, as very dear Mr. Wills has done, and thus in peace and love, harmony and union with the Lord and each other, the God of peace may abide and remain with us in all our labours for the calling and building up our Zion, till he shall appear gloriously, and eternally receive us graciously. Thus ever prays your ever truly faithful friend,

"S. HUNTINGDON.

"P.S.—Say all that's kind in Christian love to the Church at Bottle, in which Johnson does the same, who is now appointed far South for his present labours."

lowing letter to Mr. Stone of Hereford, dated Bath, Sept. 23, 1783, refers to the subject:—

“ Mr. Stone,—I am informed you are treating with some other person about the building intended for a chapel, and which I hoped you would have given me the refusal of. Now, if on rent for a long term of years, you will still, I hope, give me the preference. I shall be obliged much by it. The interfering with any one but yourself must have many and great difficulties to me, as contentions can have no good consequences, temporally or spiritually; and, indeed, it would grieve me to have dear Mrs. Paul drove from that town, who might be a great blessing to so many by her influence and example. May our gracious Lord dispose your heart for the hundreds in Hereford perishing for lack of knowledge, that the glorious Gospel of their salvation may be heard to sound in their ears! Don't fail to let me know your conditions, and that the place may be finished before winter arrives, and our principal ministers may be ready to attend the opening. Could you behold the crowds that follow the chapels of Bath and Bristol, you would be astonished. Our new galleries are running over already, though not yet completely finished. May our souls never cease to praise those merciful tokens of His favour who hath so loved us, as not only to die for us, but is so striving by His own Divine Spirit daily with the hearts of sinners to do them good!—I am, Mr. Stone, your sincere friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

On the 2nd October, her Ladyship says:—

“ I am willing to stand tenant to you, and beg you to lose no time, but get Mr. Phillips over from College, and have the lease drawn and sent to me to execute at Bath, and write me word what rent you expect, and what long term you will agree to let it for. This is all that can be wanted, and then the place may directly be prepared as a chapel of mine for divine worship; and doubting not but the Lord will give us his special blessing, I remain, Mr. Stone, your sincere friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

On the 8th December, in the same year, her Ladyship wrote thus to Mrs. Paul:—

“ My dearest Madam,—Mr. Stone brought me the account as settled for me, and which, I own, greatly surprised me that it should be done without previously having my approbation, and also requests from the people they could have no pretensions of making, if the property were mine. The state of the case is just this—Mrs. Powell appointed the stock as *she* approved; it is ready by draft or for her order, or the stock transferred to Mr. Stone, for the payment of a purchase. This I could not approve as mine; but I hope I have too much honour ever to dispute her directions. That I can, with no justice to myself, be pleased with the difficulties Mr. Powell and the people of Hereford have drawn me into, and which is clearly these:—The whole stock (now to be paid to Mr. Stone) will amount to not more than 260*l*. The simple purchase for this money is 283*l*. Three years' interest for

this money is to be paid—all the law charges and his travelling charges—all the fixtures yet unvalued, which cannot be less than one hundred and twenty or thirty pounds more. This appears thrown upon me, and that to pay for a building that not less than two or three hundred pounds more can make useful, with any degree of propriety for the character it is to bear. How far this can mean any thing but cruelty and distress to me, to add the doubt of even common justice in these proceedings, I don't see; and that good woman's present to me, only to involve me in most afflicting difficulties. Had I taken the lease as I proposed, and she have allowed me the stock for fitting it up, this would have rendered it the most effectually useful. Mr. Stone, seeing how hard it is upon me now, yet offers the lease for forty years, and the rent I am willing to be liable to; but so large a sum to be expected from me, I cannot be just to my numerous engagements, and yield fully satisfied to my own mind. My dear Madam, I am the ostensible person for all this great work over England and Wales, and without one soul to help me with one shilling. The larger congregations bear their own charges; but should these fail in any degree, the whole burdens fall upon me. Faith only sustains my burdens, and keeps me free; and in all my various distresses I have not a single bondsman to aid, strengthen, and support me; and this, lest I should involve any individual in the smallest difficulty for any thing I do, which would be to my heart intolerable to bear. You must judge, first or last, feeling the weight of 500*l.*, that I can have no object from my age, &c. honourably to pay in my present condition seems hard. I by no means approve the conduct of the people, or the treatment of Mr. Stone. 'It was lawful for him to do what he would with his own,' and to make such demands upon mere bounty appears by no means well to me; and unless Mrs. Powell does clear the whole purchase, I cannot undertake any thing but the lease, which Mr. Stone, from seeing the imposition upon me, readily grants, and I as willingly am ready to give; and if Mrs. Powell would approve the stock, or any part of it, for the completing it as a chapel, let the money remain as her's, and for her use, and the interest go on, or she may freely receive it back. I know you will wisely consider this, and view my situation delicately, while under the idea of obligations painful to a great degree to me; and facts being stubborn things, I refer all to your just and affectionate heart, being truly, my dear Madam, affectionately your faithful servant,

"S. HUNTINGDON."

Her Ladyship's letter to Mrs. Powell, on the subject of the Hereford Chapel, is dated Bath, December 13th, 1783, and runs thus:—

"Dear Madam,—Agreeably to your intentions, a draft from me goes by this post for 283*l.*, to be paid to Mr. Stone, for the various purposes included in the agreement made by you, for the purchases declared in the appointment of the money of yours in the stocks, and which you had invested me with. The stock sold for 288*l.*, so that there remains for your disposal five pounds. I find the people suppose the whole

disposition of this is now in their power, and not *in mine*. Your declaration I must wish to know the full meaning of, as to be subject to such as I have no knowledge of must release me from that confidence you had favoured me with, as not being to you or God answerable for what I cannot repose any legal trust in. I find the whole of the consequences lie upon me, and to be satisfied of your resolutions on this subject must determine my proceedings. If the gift once given to me is now so reserved as to stand in the people all further expenses which might have been incurred, in consequence of my right in the property, it cannot in justice now be referred to me, as by your former disposition of the stock to me, the full power belongs in the purchase to me—I become answerable. The importance to me of this distinction must be well understood. If it do belong to the people separate from all power vested in me, it appears different to your kind intentions of confidence in me; and then nothing can be expected from me by the people but what appears consistent with my own views, no obligation binding me to them. This affair has occasioned me much uneasiness, as indeed not knowing how to act; but as the money, with interest, has been honourably restored, the necessity appears for you and the people to know your *express meaning*. This done as soon as may be, I will beg that no disputes may arise, or any impositions from the people perplex or entangle me in difficulties. I am, dear Madam, with every best prayer for all blessings to you, your faithful friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

“P.S.—Upon Mr. Stone’s receipt of the money, I must request a full discharge *from you* as having received *again* the whole of all you had invested me with, both principal and interest, justly and honourably.”

On the 14th, her Ladyship wrote to her bankers, in reference to the above, in the following words:—

“Messrs. Balders,—I ordered the sale of five hundred pounds stock to be paid by Mr. Manley into your hands, amounting to 188*l.*; I have drawn to Mr. Henry Stone upon you for 283*l.* *for him* to receive by a note dated Dec. 13th, 1783; be pleased to honour it accordingly to him, and I am with much respect, Gentlemen, your obliged friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

These were not her Ladyship’s only troubles. The correspondence on the subject is voluminous. On the 6th of October, 1783, her Ladyship wrote thus to Mr. Derbyshire from Bath; it alludes to his opposition to Mr. Jones:—

“I was much surprised at your letter, dated Whitehaven, Sept. 27. My direction to you, and agreeable to your own request, was to abide at your own home, and study a year there; and being excused by me going to College. This I agreed to, and added that the best time might be found for your going to the North by that means. Or to this purpose; but I find you are going to set up altar against altar, and to oppose a brother student, and one I had for the work when you left it without any one. Mr. Jones, from fourteen years’ experience of his

grace, gifts, and abilities for the ministry, and I must add the most faithful, affectionate, and diligent labourer that I ever had, and the most disinterested one—I most lament you could find no one but him to choose thus to act so improperly by. If you do mean to oppose the Connexion, be open, or make peace as a Christian. Your hard sayings of Mr. Jones have no weight with me. I know him too well to receive a testimony passion, prejudice, &c., gives of him, and one so late in the work as you have been; and above all, that the large congregations you said that you had preached to in Staffordshire, were to be left; and you wanting my student Thorns to attend your wife to Whitehaven, and to abide there. The leaving the congregation in Staffordshire, and never applying to me for their being supplied, cannot be right to those poor people; and as to Thorns being allowed by me to go into the North, I on no account would admit of it. Gray is returned; John Williams is ordered for Bootle this winter, and I mean not to call Mr. Jones, as the most pressing requests from Whitehaven engage my wishing him to have yet a longer stay. I am sorry you have acted so improperly as to have occasioned this contention in the work; had you waited till Mr. Jones had been removed, all these miserable evils might have been prevented, and not have caused those offences that will follow; and my settled desires are that you should go into Staffordshire and take care of those large congregations you preach to; and when you leave for the North, to have a proper student sent in your place till your return; and thus both works taken care of, is all that can be done for the good and benefit of all, and much the best for yourself, as it is needful these present disturbances among the people should subside, and our best and universal service be given them, as on other parts of the plan. I think you shall get Messrs. Gray and Williams, and consider with them in prayer, to settle matters in a truly Christian spirit, and let them see this letter of mine, as I can only wish and pray for the mutual blessing of all ministers and people; but to support division in our own work, is not only wicked but highly unjust to my students, who have been found years faithful in the work, and who claim my utmost regard. Your offering Mr. Jones money, as you mentioned, greatly surprised me. He laboured for the people; and surely you could have no right to be his paymaster while the labourer was, without you, worthy of that which was liberally given for him, and you have received. I am sorry in these matters I cannot approve your conduct, but will hope, when you well consider, matters may be healed among you, and you leave the place for a season, as I have before mentioned; wishing ever to remain your truly faithful friend,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

To Mr. Jones, who was then at Whitehaven, her Ladyship wrote on the 8th of October, 1783:—

“I have just received your letter, which has occasioned me great uneasiness on your account, but hope before this you will have received my letter, and should not Derbyshire remove on the receipt of my letter to him (the copy of which I wrote in mine to you), he cannot continue with me; and I hope you don't think it possible I could suffer any

one to treat you with any ill usage, and therefore he must know how highly I am offended with him, and to oppose you must be so bad a spirit as I will not suffer. I would have Gray and Williams signify to the people how much I resent your being opposed, and for this end I write to them both this post, to go over and assure the people of my resolutions, that he, Derbyshire, must leave the Connexion, if he does not leave Whitehaven *directly*. The Cross is what you and I must meet with, and I don't doubt from your faithful attention to the Lord, and your as faithful conduct through all to me and the whole Connexion, but he will not only deliver you with honour to yourself, but add very much honour, and many blessings to your labours. Let us bear, my good Jones, for *his sake*, all we can meet with, and though in so close a quarter, as one that ought to be a brother, yet be assured he will confound first and last the evil-doers. Don't fail to let me hear from you, as I shall be exceeding uneasy, and keep but your ground, fearing nothing; and may the Lord strengthen you for the battle, and believe me, as ever, your truly faithful and affectionate friend,

"S. HUNTINGDON."

By the same post, Lady Huntingdon wrote to the same purpose to the Rev. Mr. Gray at Kendal, and Mr. Williams at Bootle, desiring them to go to Whitehaven on Mr. Jones's behalf; but the substance of this letter is implied in the above. To Mr. Nicholson, one of the congregation, she wrote, also recommending a general meeting for the restoration of peace at Whitehaven; and on the 29th January she again addressed Mr. Jones, who was still at Whitehaven.

We now leap from north to south, from Whitehaven to Weymouth. On the subject of Weymouth chapel, her Ladyship thus addresses Messrs. Gerard, Bangor, and White, under the date of Bath, Oct. 2nd, 1783:—

"My worthy Friend,—I am truly sorry that our old friends, Mr. Day and Mr. John, have resigned their trust over the little flock at Weymouth, rather from division arising among the people, than from offence received by me. I must now be obliged to commit to your faithful care the interest of the blessed Gospel there; and, as your greatest earthly honour, the care and protection of the cause of Jesus Christ, while faithfully preached at Weymouth in our Connexion. I should suppose that you three choosing other two, a committee among yourselves might be appointed for the regulation of all outward matters, informing me of your wants and wishes respecting the ministry, from time to time. I shall fervently pray and rejoice in hope, that the Lord's peculiar blessing may attend our united labours for the salvation of many lost souls now lying in darkness and the shadow of death, that you may abundantly rejoice with me in this happy prospect; and begging for this end, and your own precious soul, the everlasting good of all, I remain your willing servant, for the Lord's Name sake,

"S. HUNTINGDON,"

To Mr. Tomlinson, who, almost a stranger, had addressed her Ladyship on the subject of the divisions at Weymouth, the Countess wrote, on the 20th February, 1784, earnestly exhorting the congregation to peace and unity; and on the same day she wrote, referring to Mr. Tomlinson's letter, to Mr. George Wills, student at Weymouth. On the 15th December the union was not complete, for on that day her Ladyship wrote to her student, Mr. Mills, and the congregation at Weymouth, in answer to a letter from them.

“ Last night (says her Ladyship) Mr. Wickers came to me under the heaviest distress: he greatly surprised and abundantly grieved me, yet I heard all he had to say, and affirmed my own just opinion of both my students. He was going in pursuit of Pritchard, and I thought it best that my attorney should accompany him, in order to the most exact examination; and also, if found innocent, to the protection and support of my student. He seemed miserable, and assured me, that if Pritchard and Mills were found innocent, he was willing, on his knees, in the market-place of Weymouth, to beg their pardon, and clear them in the most faithful manner. I highly approve both the conduct of my student Mills, and our Christian friends at Weymouth. Let us not fear—‘ the Judge of the whole earth will do right.’ The present great success of the Gospel in all parts where our labourers are, rouses the enmity of the bottomless pit, as I find in other places; but let us be satisfied with our hundred fold in this life, *with persecution*. Our Lord has told us before, and I am willing to trust both His love and power for our security in time and for eternity, ‘ It must needs be that offences come;’ but woe to poor Mr. Wickers, if by his means he brings such upon God's servants falsely. Nothing can be more proper than all your proceedings; and on my attorney's arrival with Mr. Wickers, from my student Pritchard, out of Wiltshire, I will immediately inform you of every particular, and what appears then the most proper steps. ‘ Let us fear no evil tidings while our hearts can stand fast, trusting in the Lord.’ May His present and eternal blessing rest upon you all! and believe me to remain, as ever, your faithfully-devoted friend, for Jesus Christ's sake,

“ S. HUNTINGDON.”

On the subject of the Newark congregation, we find but one letter extant; it is dated December 9th, 1783, and addressed to the congregation in these words:—

“ To the Christian Friends of the Newark Congregation.

“ As I highly respect your faithful love and zeal for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by building a house in order to record His blessed Name among you, I doubt not but there the blessed Immanuel will come in the midst, and cause you to rejoice in having found Him to be the strength of your souls, and your God and portion for ever. The bounty of excellent Mrs. Watkins and Mrs. Rose I transmit by Mr. Poole, the bearer of this, who I have entrusted with the payment of fifty pounds for the new chapel erected among you, desiring him to see it be settled

in the trustees' hands for the establishment of the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to be, through His grace, continued among you ; and that no private interest may be suffered by this means to mix in these faithful purposes to which these bounties are finally dedicated, did I know when it was to be opened, I would appoint some of my young ministers to meet there, and together unite to preach the Lord Jesus, and on your accounts to have a day of jubilee and rejoicing among you all ; and that the everlasting blessing of the glorious covenant of free grace may abound in and with you ; and thus ever believe me your truly faithful friend, for Jesus Christ's sake,

" S. HUNTINGDON.

" P.S.—Remember me kindly to my student Watkins."

The only letter on the subject of the Sheffield congregation is dated College, July 27th, 1784, and addressed to Mr. Povah :—

" Sir,—I have received your kind and Christian letter, and which fully appears, in your faithful and disinterested offers for promoting our blessed Immanuel's kingdom, in a world of sin, misery, and apostacy from God. May your way be prosperous, your gracious soul happy, and your end victorious through the blood of the Cross ! You may consult with Mr. Watkins, of Newark ; and by the various changes that may be made in the work, our Sheffield friends may be strengthened, and the change, by speaking to various congregations, enliven and quicken your gifts the more abundantly, and comfort your heart by the prosperity of Zion, I would fain hope at present smiles around us. A short trial will satisfy you of the approbation of the people, and the most perfect peace of your own mind, and my greatest satisfaction. Let us ' live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you,' is our promise, and carefully avoid ' any that may make division among us.' I desire my kindest thanks to our little flock at Sheffield. Assure them of our tenderest care for you and them. Before another ordination, we may jointly consider the expediency of any step to be taken by you, for the fullest satisfaction of the Connexion. I am but a very poor unworthy servant of the churches ; but my love and care of them (next my beloved Master) is my only crown of rejoicing upon earth. If they but prosper and stand fast in the Lord, the greatest trials appear but as a morning cloud. You must see the obligations I must ever think myself under for your's and all our dear people's prayers ; and commending you all to those everlasting arms of mercy, that embraced a life of misery and a death of shame and sorrow for us all, I remain, Mr. Povah, your willing friend, and sincerely such for the Lord's sake,

" S. HUNTINGDON."

On the subject of Berkhamstead, we have three letters remaining ; one is dated Bath, October 16th, 1783, and is addressed—

" To our faithful Friends at Berkhamstead.

" My worthy Friends,—I have received with great pleasure your very kind and truly Christian letter, and I am greatly comforted by

the account given of Mr. Barnard, who has so fully answered my prayers and wishes among you. I am under a necessity of changing him to another congregation at present, yet occasional visits I should wish he should make you, as I have found a succession of both ministers and students to be most for the edification of the people and improvement of the ministerial gifts. As to any government in particular, nothing is required but receiving the various ministers as sent, and providing for them as all other churches do, and an account kept by a faithful committee to keep the order of regular payments, and to lie open for the inspection of the subscribers. I wish for great exactness on this subject, to cut off occasion to those who might seek it, and to have it universally appear simplicity and godly sincerity only rules among us. The services of the Church our young ordained ministers use or avoid, as the congregations may occasionally choose, as thinking it most apostolic to become all things in these matters so we might save some, and so become weak to the weak. These liberalities of principle must mean to destroy those many evils bigotry abounds with, while we boldly and faithfully maintain the converting power of the Gospel, as by Jesus Christ our only means of salvation. Thus you must see our meaning can only be to call all people to the profession of the glorious and blessed truths of the Gospel, whatever their outward profession may be, and leaving ourselves in this well-doing in the hands of our gracious Lord and Master, we become your servants for his sake as with all others. For the present I shall appoint my student Hayes to succeed Barnard for a season; and any thing you wish to be satisfied upon, if you apply to my two faithful and beloved friends Mr. Wills or Mr. Taylor, whichever shall be at Spafields chapel, and as those whose hearts are so wholly devoted to the most unwearied and disinterested services of the Gospel, you may be sure that all they should advise would ever have my fullest approbation.

“I hope you will deal kindly by Mr. Barnard on his leaving you, as he has a wife, and expense has of course been needful for his first attendance on you. Begging the Lord’s most divine blessing may ever be in the midst of you all, and eternally rest on your precious soul, I remain your truly faithful friend and servant in the Gospel of Jesus Christ,
“S. HUNTINGDON.”

The second letter is addressed to Mr. Ellis, on his ordination, and is dated College, August 8th, 1784; it runs thus:—

“I have received your letter, and as to the character from Mr. Aldridge, I shall be fully satisfied both from the opinion of his judgment, and the regard his many years’ faithful services in the College labours will ever claim. Your request is so reasonable, that no objections that can be just will ever be made. The neighbouring congregation of the Lord’s day I require the students to attend. This for the helping their gifts and keeping up zeal in the services of the Gospel, I have found needful; but for six months I will agree the master shall not appoint you out in my absence to any remoter place for that time. I think it, in justice to you, necessary fully to apprise you of every difficulty possible. The first is, that such as are taken in *now*,

mean to be ordained in the Secession : and while so deprived of my rights is the only means faithfully to supply these congregations during my life, and more so after my death, who are warmly united to us. The plan of this is in a narrative by Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor, published last June, with the Confession of Faith, in order that our principles and practice may the most consistently and universally and harmoniously be as only one. This I beg you to examine the most strictly with your heart and conscience ; and from that poor unworthy man at Chatteris you have and must see the great, very great importance to us all as we stand connected. ‘Live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you.’ I would also have you weigh fully the great labours, so extensive as our work must produce, for all who from conviction of conscience do believe the Lord to be with us. I wish to shew the tenderest care ; but God’s work *must* be done, and *His calls* obeyed by myself and you all, cost what it will, or we deserve not the just idea that belongs to his servants, much less faithful ones. Many trials, temptations, and difficulties attend us, but our gracious Lord has told us before, and that the Cross is the way to the gift of his crown, and the not willingly taking this portion of tribulation must exclude that provision of his peace he has only annexed to so high a favour as being allowed to follow him. Our security is sufficiently great to assure us that we are the best arithmeticians earth ever can have for the present or future reckoning here. Peace here, and glory for ever, and that for the wicked beggars only. I most earnestly entreat your most cool consideration, as, next to any disappointments to you, they must to me become doubly painful. Free and cheerful zeal for the Lord and his labours is a principal joy of my whole life, while slothful services mean and tell nothing but the most foolish life, with a ‘cast out at last.’

“Should you think after this of devoting your life, talents, and all to that God we would be found only to serve in life and death, and thus become so his happy subjects for ever, you will freely have not only the hospitality of my College, but my heart in your services. Otherwise, any thing will be better for you. Kindly remember me to my old friend Mr. Aldridge, and shew him this letter ; and believe me, Mr. Ellis, I am your well-wisher, “S. HUNTINGDON.”

“P.S.—I hope you have left Mr. Bull and his friends honourably, that it may appear I have no hand in taking you away from them ; a practice I must despise from its meanness and baseness.”

This latter sentiment is repeated in a letter to Mr. Blake, of Berkhamstead, on his seeking admission into the Connexion. It is dated Bath, July 13th, 1784, and is as follows :—

“Mr. Blake,—I have received your letter, but being so absolute a stranger to you, must have further information of you ; and, in justice to you, have you well informed of the nature of all our services in the Gospel, that no difficulties may arise hereafter ; and hearing for yourself, and seeing into all things for yourself, can only admit most justly your fullest satisfaction in joining this Connexion. The great distance that I

am at present at renders this less easy than I could wish ; and the only means I can suggest is, for you to go to Tunbridge Wells, where the Rev. Mr. Taylor, minister of my chapel, will at once inform you of every particular you can desire to know ; and being a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, will be attentive to render more explicitly my sentiments relative to principles, and the labours you must share with us, if fully united with us. I am exceedingly cautious who I receive out of other Connexions, thinking it by no means honourable to engage another's friend from his help ; and though this is shamefully practised in other bodies of people, yet I look upon it as base, and in every sense unwarrantable, and as wanting common moral honesty in any who so practise it. I must request that your parting with Mr. Wesley be exactly proper, for though my principles may differ from others, my justice and respect must be due in all my conduct to any professing themselves the servants of God. I shall write to Mr. Taylor by this post, and send him word that I have wrote thus to you, that he may be best prepared for every satisfaction you may want on all subjects ; and in consequence of this, you may expect further directions from me. I pray that our gracious Lord and Saviour may direct you in that way which shall in present and future most glorify his grace, and your constant and everlasting happiness. I am, Mr. Blake, your faithful well-wisher,

“S. HUNTINGDON.”

In the year 1774 the Gospel was first introduced into the Established Church at Birmingham, and St. Mary's chapel was erected, at the sole expense of a Miss Wayman. It was first opened for Divine service on the 24th of August, in that year, and consecrated by the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. One of the first ministers was the Rev. John Ryland, who had been curate of Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, and one of Mr. Venn's most valued and faithful friends and correspondents. He was afterwards rector of Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire. To him succeeded the Rev. Edward Burn, who had been educated at Trevecca, and had itinerated some years in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. He was the “Irish student,” for whom Mr. Shirley obtained admission into the College, and who by his exemplary conduct ever preserved the good opinion and friendship of his noble patroness.

Not long after the opening of St. Mary's chapel, Lady Huntingdon sent some of her students to Birmingham, and other places in the neighbourhood. In process of time, a congregation was raised, and a chapel opened in Paradise-street, in which many of the early ministers in the Connexion proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ, and were heard with deep and earnest attention. Some years after, her Ladyship purchased the old play-house, and sent the Rev. John Bradford, formerly of Wadham College, Oxford, to preach in it. This gentleman was curate of Frelsham, in Berkshire ; and, soon after he began

to preach the Gospel, paid a visit to Bath, where he attempted, for the first time, to preach without notes.

“On my return (says he) from Bath, I found the church shut against me, and a letter from Lady Huntingdon, from whom I afterwards received many favours, and more spiritual edification than from all the books I ever read, or all the preaching or conversation I ever heard.”

Mr. Bradford was at this time extremely popular, and his ministry was usually attended by very great crowds. The following extract of a letter, relative to the converting of the play-house into a place of worship, deserves to be recorded:—

“One thing (says the writer of it) I well recollect, and which I certainly never shall forget for the singularity of it, which is this:—When the play-house was first purchased by her Ladyship, a pulpit was erected upon the front of the stage, in which Mr. Bradford used to preach. People used to go into the boxes, pit, and gallery, as usual, to hear him, and also upon the stage; and it generally was pretty full, sometimes crowded. The people used to hear with great attention; and whenever any thing was spoken by Mr. Bradford which the people approved, and considered as solid argument or genuine religion, built upon the Rock of Ages, and consistent with the revelation of the Bible, they immediately clapped hands for a short time, as at a play! Mr. Bradford submitted, and held his peace till they had done, and proceeded as calmly as if nothing had happened. This was repeated several times during the discourse; it continued for some time, till the people became more serious, and it was properly converted into a meeting.”

The theatre was soon changed to a chapel, and has since been supplied by the ministers in Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. The late Mr. Bennet, who was educated at Trevecca, was minister of this place for many years. The present minister is the Rev. John Jones, from Cheshunt College; and the congregation continues numerous and respectable.

A circumstance occurred in the summer of 1786, in which the malice of the enemy, and the Lord's interposition, were wonderfully displayed. Lord Douglass, a descendant of an ancient Scotch family of that name and title, had resided for some time at Brussels, and there lived, according to the custom of the country, a professed Papist; and as these deluded characters think (with Paul in his days of ignorance) they are doing God service, by hauling to prison, judgment, and death, all whom they deem heretics, so this unhappy nobleman thought he would not be behind-hand with his Catholic ancestors; and as Lady Huntingdon's fame extended far and wide, he proposed to strike a blow at her, probably concluding the advantages which the Papal Church would receive would be incalculably great, as,

no doubt, he thought her destruction would be an effectual step towards the extirpation of a people so very obnoxious to the popish system.

The better to effect the design he had formed, Lord Douglass came to England, in the year 1775 or 1777, and pretended an entire recantation of the principles of the Church of Rome. He regularly attended at the Lock Chapel, and other places where the Gospel was preached. Having ingratiated himself into the favour of Lady Huntingdon, and by his insinuations passed not only for a firm Protestant, but a warm espouser of the pure Gospel, he embarked for Brussels, where he continued to reside to the period of his death.

In the year 1785 he sent a letter to Lady Huntingdon, informing her that an opportunity then offered of introducing and establishing the Gospel in that superstitious country, that whoever she sent over should be under his protection and patronage, and he should be happy in receiving a visit from her Ladyship and Mr. Wills, as he had much at heart the introduction not only of Protestantism, but the light of Gospel truth in those regions of Popish darkness.

Lady Huntingdon, actuated by her accustomed zeal, politely thanked him for his invitation and offer, and assured his Lordship, that both she and Mr. Wills would pay him a visit in the summer of 1786. Accordingly it was so concerted, that her Ladyship and Mr. Wills were to embark for the Continent on a day appointed; and as Lady Huntingdon was then at the College in Wales, Mr. Wills left London, in order to take a little excursion in the country, and return to town by the time her Ladyship arrived in the metropolis, when both were to proceed on their voyage to Brussels.

Lady Huntingdon had a new equipage prepared for the expedition, and set off from Wales for her town house in Spaffields, in order to meet Mr. Wills at the time appointed. But now the overruling Providence of God appeared in a very singular manner. It so happened that her Ladyship, on her way to London, stopped at different towns where there were chapels in her Connexion, in order to regulate matters connected with them, by which means she was unavoidably detained longer than the day appointed for their embarkation. A few days after her arrival in London, letters were received from the Continent, informing them, that it was a concerted scheme to get them over, and then to seize the first opportunity of putting a period to their lives, as heretics unfit to live. Such was the stratagem to destroy these faithful servants of the Lord. But that God “who brings to nought the counsels of the wicked, and maketh

the devices of the people of none effect," proved himself the protector and deliverer of his servants.

The providence of God appears in a conspicuous manner, in so ordering it that her Ladyship should be unexpectedly detained on her journey, so as to cause it to be later before she arrived in London than the day appointed for their embarkation; inasmuch as, by that means, they received the letters which disclosed this accursed project. Had they sailed for Brussels before the arrival of those letters, they would inevitably have fallen into the hands of their enemies, and become the victims of their malice.

Thus appears the mercy of the Lord in behalf of his servant; but his justice was displayed in a manner equally conspicuous, for it is an undoubted fact, that on the very day that Lady Huntingdon left Wales, Lord Douglass, then in perfect health, dropped down and instantly expired. So true is the Word, "None shall fight against me and prosper;" and "no weapon formed against his people shall succeed; but every tongue that riseth up in judgment against them, they shall condemn." Sooner or later God will avenge his own elect, in their complete deliverance from every foe, and in the eternal destruction of his and their enemies.

The following letter from Lady Huntingdon to friends at Norwich, is inserted here, because it adverts to the visit of her Ladyship to the Continent, which she designed, but was mercifully prevented from proceeding in, by the discovery of this detestable plot:—

ORIGINAL LETTER OF THE LATE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON TO FRIENDS
AT NORWICH.

"My very worthy and beloved Friends,—Sickness and business daily almost overpower my old age; this will account for any neglect of mine, as my heart ever remains the same to you. I am most truly obliged by your kind letter just received, and though setting out on my journey to Germany, I could not let your kind, warm-hearted and most Christian letter be unanswered. I have a large chapel taken for me at Brussels; and this, for the occasional use of all the ministers in my Connexion in England. Time must show the wise and gracious dispensations of my few evil days yet remaining. As for the envy, malice, and jealousy of other parties, I beg the Lord to pity them; but, blessed be his name, to the most unworthy he yet shows his loving-kindness and tender mercies. Above six hundred Protestant families are now in Brussels, and much expectation is raised for my establishment there. Give me your prayers for faith, patience, and humility, that neither men nor devils may move me from the hope of the Gospel, which I have been called to glory in, as my only earthly honour. My heart, prayers, cries, and tears, will be with you and for you, that the

Lord may make and keep all to the end. It would fail me to tell you the abundant and overflowing instances of his love, which he is daily affording, by the spread of the blessed Gospel of peace far and wide. Fourteen young ministers ordained at the College promise well, and many great and bitter trials the Lord is bringing me through, to praise him. Five chapels, new and large, and very great congregations now just establishing. This, with calls from all quarters, obliges us to be diligent in business, as well as fervent in spirit. And now, my worthy, old, and kind friends, try to raise up some simple-hearted young men that know something of the Lord, for the very poor, in the villages, that by reading and prayer they may help them. I leave the half I have, for the support of the College and other things, as my heart is with you all. And as for a season the withdrawing my maintenance abroad must be a great loss, so I do earnestly beg and entreat that the travelling fund, by either subscription or collection, be all the committee's care, every where; and if I drop, all from me must cease: so this collection, once or twice a-year, is all I ask, as this is the only means of carrying the Gospel to the poor and ignorant in dark places, where their poverty cannot call for it. You may have a direction to me, from Spafields to Germany. Should I arrive there *alive*, it is but three days longer than your letter to College. And now, farewell—farewell, my dear old faithful friends; and if we never more meet to see each other again below, we shall sing 'Worthy the Lamb,' with heart and voice, to all eternity. O blessed exchange from sin, sorrow, and misery, to glorify Jesus to eternity in the smiles of his countenance! May this be our blessed lot! and, as ever, so remains your faithful friend,

College, April 10, 1787.

"S. HUNTINGDON."

Defeated in this accursed project, the great enemy of mankind sought another scheme to blast the usefulness of these devoted persons, and bring a reproach on the cause to which their whole souls were consecrated; this was, to sow the seeds of discord between Mr. Wills and Lady Huntingdon, which led to a separation of the former from her Ladyship's Connexion in the year 1788. There is such an alloy of sin in the best characters, that a severe examination will always discover blemishes; and where there are charges and recriminations, the impartial reader will generally conclude there must be "faults on both sides." We can here only deplore the existence of any difference between the disciples of the Lord Jesus while we remark the truth of the Scriptures, which record similar circumstances, and impute them to an unsubdued temper, wrought upon by the accuser of the brethren. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Soon after this event, Lady Huntingdon wrote a recommendatory preface to a volume of sermons by that laborious servant of Christ, the Rev. William Ridge, minister of the Gospel at Great

Yarmouth. The sermons were only seven in number—viz., three on the spiritual actings of faith through all natural impossibilities; two on the great things faith can do; one entitled “no ground of discouragement for believers, whatever their conditions;” and the other on “the cure of all discouragements by faith in Christ Jesus.” The preface is inserted in a note,* as it contains a short epitome of her Ladyship’s sentiments at the close of her long and arduous course. The volume was recommended to the congregation in connexion with her.

* “TO THE READER.

“From the various speculations of the religious world upon faith, it seems to be too much considered as merely an assent of the understanding to certain credible propositions contained in the Scriptures, instead of the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; and as the power and spring of all Divine and spiritual communication with heaven, as well as of every practical excellency earth. The latter, the author of the following sermons, the Rev. William Ridge, ably proves. And as it is confined wholly to the experimental knowledge of the Christian religion, and communicated by the Spirit of God to the soul of man, through the Word, so does it belong to us, as our great privilege; to become well acquainted with the nature and power of it. Into whatever hands, therefore, the works of this faithful and suffering witness for the truths of the Gospel may come, let it never cease to be the desire of your hearts, and your earnest prayer to the Lord, the author and finisher of our faith, that he would as his own free gift, bestow it upon you. Suffer me to request, that no lukewarm pursuits after less powerful truths may ever engage your attention, as all without this, must be ineffectual, either for your real comfort here, or your salvation hereafter. Examine well the importance of the truth held forth to you by this blessed servant of God, who though dead, yet speaketh (like the voice of Abel, Heb. xi. 4), the excellency of that ONE OFFERING once offered, by which witness can alone be obtained through faith, that you are righteous in opposition to the unhallowed offering of all things else.

“May you, then, walk by faith, as Enoch did; and never cease to remember that without it, it is *impossible* to please God. Reject the testimony of all who vainly and ignorantly tell you that it is not the only means of Gospel obedience; and beware, also, of low prejudices or partiality to mere matters of opinion, to which no evidence from God is promised in his word to the mind of man; faith and faith alone, being the substance (or subsistence) of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. As such, it secures to us the testimony that we have not belied nor run in vain. As a Divine pledge of future glory, it is a rich compensation to us for all the misery of various afflictions which are connected with our fallen state in Adam; and by the power of God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, there arises in our hearts through faith that glorious kingdom of God, which is righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.

“That our gracious Lord of his own free love and grace, may bless, and thus devote your heart and mine by his own power to himself, so effectually as to prove that the tree is made good by the divine and heavenly fruit it bears, both in life and death, is the affectionate prayer of a faithful friend to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

“Spafields, London, March 13, 1789.

“S. HUNTINGDON.

CHAPTER LIV.

Increase of the Connexion—Association for perpetuating the Connexion—Plan of the Association—Letter to the Congregation at Bath—Welsh Calvinistic Methodists—Failure of the Plan—Opposed by Dr. Haweis and Lady Anne Erskine—Lady Huntingdon's Connexion—Observations on Bequests—Extracts from Lady Huntingdon's Will—Devisees of Lady Huntingdon—Her controul over the Connexion—Rules for Lady Huntingdon's Societies—Property bequeathed to Lady Huntingdon's Connexion—Letter to Mr. Priestley—Death of Lady Huntingdon—Her last words—Letter from Dr. Lettsom to Lady Anne Erskine—Funeral Sermon—Character of Lady Huntingdon—Last Interview with Mr. Priestley.

FROM very many parts of England the most urgent calls for assistance were now addressed to Lady Huntingdon; and probably the pressure of business, together with the consciousness that her labours must necessarily be given up to others, induced her Ladyship to feel desirous of seeing some plan carried into effect for perpetuating the work which the Lord had honoured her by enabling her to begin. Accordingly, we find that in 1790 several ministers and laymen, who wished well to the cause of Christ, at the invitation of Lady Huntingdon, formed themselves into an "Association," for the purpose of aiding her Ladyship during her life-time, and perpetuating the Connexion after her decease. The sketch of the plan is dated Spafields, March 3, 1790, and signed, "By order of the Countess of Huntingdon and the Association—George Best, Secretary." The plan was accompanied by a circular letter from her Ladyship, in which she expressed, "not only her approbation, but the prospect of the peace she anticipated on her dying pillow, should she be spared to see it put into execution.*

Mr. Best was an agent of the Countess, to whom she left a legacy, "in consideration of his faithful services." It is worthy

** Plan of an Association for Uniting and Perpetuating the Connexion of the Right Honourable the Countess-Dowager of Huntingdon.*

In consequence of an invitation from the Right Honourable Selina, Countess-Dowager of Huntingdon, several ministers and laymen, who wish well to the cause of Christ and her Ladyship's Connexion, have formed themselves into an Association, called "THE LONDON ACTING ASSOCIATION," for the purpose of assisting her Ladyship, during her life-time, as far as she shall be pleased to accept of their services, in carrying on the work of the Gospel of Christ in her Connexion; and, as far as they may be enabled, for perpetuating the same after her Ladyship's decease. Being desirous of using such means as appear to them (under God) most likely to carry the same into effect, they beg leave, with all deference, to submit the following plan to her Ladyship's consideration; which,

of remark, that this plan bears date about seven weeks after the Countess executed her will, and is said to have originated with the late Rev. William Francis Platt, in consequence of various

if approved, they further beg may be printed, and a copy thereof sent to every congregation in her Ladyship's Connexion; not doubting but they will cheerfully unite, and with them engage in their feeble attempts to carry on the great and important work.

PLAN.

- I. That a General Association be formed, entitled,
 "The Countess-Dowager of Huntingdon's General Association."
- II. That the whole Connexion be divided into proper Districts.
- III. That the Districts be as follow, viz.

1. <i>London</i>—Spafields, Mulberry-gardens, Sion, and Holywell Mount. 2. <i>Reading</i>—Reading, Goring, Wallingford, Rickmansworth, and Basingstoke. 3. <i>Feversham</i>—Feversham, Dover, Milton, and Tonbridge Wells. 4. <i>Brighthelmstone</i> — Brighthelmstone, Lewes, Chichester, and Oat Hall. 5. <i>Ely</i> — Ely, Chatteris, Ramsey (Huntingdonshire), and Peterborough. 6. <i>Sudbury</i>—Sudbury, Fordham, and Woodbridge. 7. <i>Bath</i>—Bath. 8. <i>Bristol</i>—Bristol and Swansea. 9. <i>Wincanton</i>—Wincanton, a horse ride, and Frome. 10. <i>St. Columbe</i>—St. Columbe, a horse ride, and Star Cross. 11. <i>Gloucester</i>—Gloucester, Hereford, Coleford, and Banbury.	12. <i>Worcester</i>—Worcester, Eversham, and Kidderminster. 13. <i>Monmouth</i>—Monmouth, Broad-oak, and Langadock. 14. <i>Birmingham</i>—Birmingham, West Bromwich, Handsworth, and Edgbaston. 15. <i>Wolverhampton</i> — Wolverhampton, Dudley, and Bilston. 16. <i>Ashby-de-la-Zouch</i> — Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Ashford. 17. <i>Wigan</i>—Wigan. 18. <i>Ulverston</i>—Ulverston, and Whitehaven. 19. <i>Norwich</i>—Norwich. 20. <i>Lincoln</i>—Lincoln, Gainsborough, and Newark. 21. <i>Haxey</i>—Haxey, and Pinchbeck, Partney. 22. <i>York</i>—York, Hull, and Helmsley. 23. <i>Morpeth</i>—Morpeth.
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- IV. That a Committee be formed in each county district; consisting of the ministers for the time being, together with two laymen from each congregation, and that they be called "The Committee of the Countess of Huntingdon's Association for the District of —."
- V. That the London Acting Association be considered the Committee for the District of London.
- VI. That each Committee shall meet once a quarter, or oftener if necessary; the members thereof determining the time and place of their meetings.
- VII. That they, at such meetings, take into consideration and deliberate upon all matters which concern the cause of Christ in her Ladyship's Connexion in their district.
- VIII. That within ten days after every such meeting the Committee shall transmit an account of their proceedings to the London Acting Association, who shall lay the same before the General Association at their annual meetings.
- IX. That no Congregation nor District Committee contract any debt, but what they agree to discharge, without the consent of the General Association previously obtained.
- X. That one or more of the ministers present do preach at each meeting of the Committees.
- XI. That all the ministers in her Ladyship's Connexion, together with the laymen who compose the District Committees, be considered as members of the General Association.
- XII. That, in order to avoid unnecessary expense and trouble, and also to

conversations he had with her Ladyship respecting the state of the Connexion in 1789, when he was, for the first time, supplying Spafelds Chapel. The plan was known long before it

prevent the congregations being unsupplied if all the members were obliged to attend, it is proposed that a minister and two laymen from each District Committee be deputed to meet the London Acting Association in London once in every year; who, together with the Trustees of her Ladyship's College for the time being, shall compose the General Association.

XIII. That each district pay the expense of its deputation attending the General Association.

XIV. That a minister be appointed to preach every day during the meeting of the General Association.

XV. That the state and concerns of the Connexion at large be laid before the General Association at their annual meetings.

XVI. That all disputed matters, which cannot be otherwise settled, shall be finally adjusted by the determination of the General Association.

XVII. That a delegated power from the General Association shall constantly reside in the London Acting Association, to transact the concerns of the Connexion during the intervals of the annual meetings; and all their proceedings be laid before the General Association.

XVIII. That every minister, offering himself to join the Connexion, shall, if approved of, be received by the General Association.

XIX. The Lord having in the present age much blessed itinerant preaching, it is proposed that circuits be formed in different parts of the kingdom, for the further spread of the Gospel of Christ; and that preachers be sent out and supported by the Connexion, as collectively considered, so far as the Lord enables and their finances will allow.

XX. That every minister and student in the Connexion, who may be in town at the time of the meeting of the General Association, be at liberty to attend the same; but the latter not to have a voice in their deliberations and determinations.

XXI. That the minutes of the General Association be printed, and a copy of them sent to every District Committee.

XXII. That an account of the names and places of abode of all the ministers and students in the Connexion be entered in a book kept for that purpose.

And, in order more effectually to carry this plan into execution, it is proposed,

XXIII. That a fund be raised, separate and distinct from the supplies raised by congregations for the support of their respective places of worship, and also from the fund called the Travelling Fund, and the fund of the Apostolic Society.

XXIV. For this purpose, the members of the Societies in particular, and the friends of the Connexion in general, are invited to contribute an assistance of not less than a penny a week each person.

XXV. That this fund be called "*The General Association Fund.*"

XXVI. That the money contributed be received by a treasurer, appointed by each district; who shall nominate and appoint such persons, at each chapel or place of public worship, as may be necessary to collect it. The money to be transmitted by the treasurer after each quarterly meeting of the district, to the treasurer or treasurers of the London Acting Association.

XXVII. That books agreeable to a plan now used by the London Acting Association, be recommended to the treasurers and collectors of the districts.

XXVIII. That collecting the subscriptions and contributions be ever considered as a labour of love and free service.

XXIX. That the disposal of the money be restricted solely to the determination and appointment of the General Association, for such purposes as they shall think proper, provided the same be for the benefit and sole use of the Connexion.

was signed. When printed and circulated through the Connexion, her Ladyship expressed her approbation of it in writing, and her letter which accompanied it was printed in italics. We have not been able to meet with a copy of this letter; but there is a very interesting one in existence, written by the Countess, from which we shall make a few extracts. It is dated Spafields, May 19th, 1780, about four months after she had signed her will:—

“ To my well-beloved Friends of the Congregation of my Chapel, Bath.

“ I am now in the eighty-fourth year of my age, and much bodily pain fills the greatest part of my declining and evil days; but you remain, as ever, near and dear to my heart, and will do till my last breath ceases to make me an inhabitant of the earth. I have, also, with many an aching heart, felt the vast importance to the comfort of you all, how the most faithfully to preserve the pure and blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ among you when I am gone. A variety of ways my many hours of sorrowful prayers and tears have suggested, and the settlement of my best meanings has many times been put in execution. But, alas! where my best confidence has from time to time been placed, the Lord has confounded it. I resolved, therefore, to make known my requests to Him alone, for his only just and righteous will in this matter. And seeing the union and fellowship of my beloved Welsh friends, by the simple means of an association, I have ever since been desirous that my various congregations may be thus united, and in this bond of love and peace to carry on to future ages the pure and undefiled Gospel of Jesus Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, and blessed over all for ever. For this end, the whole, general, and universal design is sent to you, without reserve; and I may assure you, that nothing is or has been done in it without my special inspection. I recommend, therefore, the enclosed plan to be laid before the association of your district, that their sentiments, by your deputies, may be communicated to the whole body at the General Association, of the meeting of which I shall give you timely notice. I also recommend the members of the London Acting Association as men worthy of your highest confidence and respect, earnestly zealous for your welfare, and diligent in their labours of love in the work of the Lord,” &c. &c.

The Countess, in naming her Welsh friends, evidently refers

XXX. That no money for new buildings, or erection of galleries, be taken from this fund without the concurrence of at least seven-eighths of the General Association.

XXXI. Should a division of the Connexion at any future period be attempted, it is proposed that, so long as eleven members of the General Association continue united to carry on the cause of Christ in this Connexion, agreeable to the foregoing rules, they shall be considered not only competent, but fully empowered to conduct the same.

. It is requested, if any alterations in the districts be thought necessary, that the London Acting Association may be acquainted therewith.

By order of the Countess of Huntingdon, and the Association,
Spafields, March 3, 1790.

GEORGE BEST, Secretary.

to the *Welsh Calvinistic Methodists*, who have retained the same social plan to the present day. The result is, that, by the blessing of God, the great majority of the religious population of Wales now belong to that denomination. God has greatly blessed that people, and the life and power of godliness are still enjoyed in their numerous religious societies. It will be recollected that the College which the good Countess supported at her own expense had been in South Wales for more than twenty years, when she so affectionately referred to them, during which time she had abundant opportunities of becoming acquainted with the good resulting from their ministers, elders, and members associating together in their monthly and annual meetings.

Lady Huntingdon's wishes proved abortive. The plan and letters were circulated, a subscription was commenced in London, which in a short time amounted to something considerable, but the execution was prevented, and the plan abandoned, on the following grounds. On the envelope which contained the above letter of the Countess to her Bath friends, Dr. Haweis, who had a few months before been nominated as one of her Ladyship's devisees, wrote the following words, which he addressed to Messrs. Shepherd and Ford:—"If her Ladyship pleases to insist on the scheme being enforced at Bath, I shall be very sorry, as I am unable to concur in it, and it must separate me from you." Lady Anne Erskine, another devisee of the Countess, objected also, and opposed the plan: but it was abandoned chiefly through the conduct of Mr. Bradford, who was then at Birmingham, and who persuaded many of the subscribers that he had not been treated with kindness, as Lady Huntingdon had dismissed him, in consequence of the remonstrance he had sent to them. This opposition to her Ladyship's opinion gave Lady Anne full scope for her opposition, because, if it had been carried into effect, she would have had very little concern in the future management of the Connexion, and this she was anxious to have to the utmost extent; and therefore she never let her Ladyship rest until she broke it up, which was accelerated by the secession of many of the members, who, after Mr. Bradford came to London, joined him, and sat under his ministry.

Although the plan was at that time abandoned, because the Countess was too feeble to resist the current which, at a season of great difficulty, set in against it, it does not appear that her judgment as to its merits was altered. It is evident that it had long been her earnest desire that her various Connexions might be united, after the manner of her Welsh friends, whose union and fellowship, by the simple means of an association, she so

much admired. If, therefore, in this first effort to unite her own Connexion, she met with obstructions, either by any defect in the machinery, or untowardness in some of the agents, she was aware that these evils would admit of a remedy, and they did not change her opinion as to the benefits of union, or cause her to despair of its accomplishment.

Had the Connexion been wisely managed from the period of the decease of the Countess, how extensive and flourishing would it have become by this time!—It seems necessary that they should exist as a distinct religious community, since they differ from other denominations, either in points of doctrine or of discipline. They differ from the Wesleyans, by holding the doctrinal articles of the Church of England in their Calvinistic sense; from the Baptists, by the administration of baptism to infants, and that by sprinkling or pouring; from the Independents, in admitting the lawfulness, and in many cases the expediency, of using a scriptural liturgy; from the Church of England herself, in being free to employ whatever they deem valuable, and to refuse what appears to them objectionable, in her services, while they are exempt from that corrupting influence to which she is exposed by her union with the State. Many candid persons have acknowledged that Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, if properly conducted, is calculated to be a great blessing to the country, as affording an opportunity for such pious and orthodox members of the Church of England to exercise their ministry as cannot give their hearty assent and consent to every thing contained in and prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer; as meeting the views of such as have been deprived of the services of an evangelical clergyman; and by a judicious abridgment and distribution of the prayers, in connexion with the faithful preaching of the Word and administration of the ordinances, providing for the spiritual instruction and edification of the people in general.

There is yet abundant scope for our most active and strenuous exertions. England is far from being thoroughly evangelized. London and other large towns, as well as country places, call for our serious attention. Ireland presents a wide field for the operation of an Evangelical ministry, and has strong claims upon the sympathy of England. The emigration of many to Canada and other places demand that we should not be unmindful of their spiritual welfare. Looking around us on the British dominions, and especially on the world at large, we are constrained to exclaim, "The harvest truly is great, and the labourers are few." The increased zeal and success of some denominations ought not to cause the members of Lady Huntingdon's Con-

nexion to relax from the ardour displayed by the venerable foundress, or induce them to confine their exertions to the chapels vested in trust; but, with so wide a field before them, should provoke them to love and good works, *that their Connexion, which formerly took the lead among Calvinists in this country*, in active aggressions upon the enemy, may not now be the last to come “to the help of the Lord against the mighty.” O, for the spirit of former times! Spirits of Whitefield, of Grimshaw, and of Berridge, wake!

Choice-owned restorers of primeval truth! “Awake, awake! put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord! awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old!”

Lady Huntingdon, in the prospect of dissolution, found various difficulties present themselves, in the way of her settling the different chapels on a basis such as she could have wished. The law of England, with the view of preventing improper advantage being taken of the feelings of dying persons, renders null and void all *bequests* of buildings or lands for *religious* or even for *charitable* uses;* nor does even the settlement of a building or of land, for such uses, by deed of trust, stand valid, unless the party thus disposing of the property shall survive twelve months. Aware of the legal impediments to the disposal of her chapels for religious uses by will, and her state of health rendering it very doubtful whether, if deeds of trust had been executed, she would survive the length of time required by law to render such deeds valid, she resorted to the only expedient that remained—that of leaving the chapels and houses by will to certain persons, with unrestricted power to sell or dispose of the same to such uses as they might think proper. This part of the will is introduced in the following remarkable language:—

“And whereas the grand view and desire of my life hath been the good of all mankind, by the spread and promotion of the Gospel of the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, both abroad and at home; and I have the most earnest desire and hope, in my latest moments, before and above all things, that the same may be promoted by all possible means; and, in regard, I know, that devises (of land or houses) to charitable uses are contrary to law, I do hereby declare that the foregoing bequest (of house and chapels) to be made by me freed from any such use—I relying on the almighty power and good grace of Jesus Christ my God and Saviour to dispose their hearts in all things which may tend most to his honour and glory, and the real good of mankind, by

* The fact that *buildings* or *land* cannot be bequeathed for religious uses, should be more fully known. *Money* may be bequeathed for religious uses by will, but *buildings* or *land* can only be appropriated for religious uses by deed of trust, executed twelve months at least before death.

spreading and promoting his glorious and precious Gospel, as well abroad as at home."

It is well known that her Ladyship either erected or possessed herself of chapels in various parts of the kingdom, in which she appointed such persons to officiate as ministers as she thought fit, revoking such appointment at her pleasure. The congregations who worshipped in these chapels were denominated "Lady Huntingdon's Connexion," and the minister who officiated in them, "Ministers in her Ladyship's Connexion." Over the affairs of this "Connexion" Lady Huntingdon exercised a *moral* power to the time of her death; not only appointing and removing the ministers who officiated in her chapels, but also appointing laymen in each congregation to superintend its secular concerns, whom she denominated the "Committee of Management."

Lady Huntingdon, by her will, which bears date January the 11th, 1790, gave and devised,

"All her chapels, houses, and furniture therein, and all the residue of her estates and effects, to Thomas Haweis and Janetta Payne, his wife, Lady Anne Agnes Erskine, and John Lloyd; and directed, that on the death of any one of them, the survivors or survivor should appoint one other person, by writing under their hands signed in the presence of two witnesses (except certain ministers therein named), and so from time to time, as any one should die, she directed the survivors or survivor to appoint another person in the room of the deceased, so that there might be always four persons to hold and enjoy the same; and she gave and devised the same, or such part thereof as should not be disposed of by her trustees therein named, unto such four persons as should from time to time be nominated, in as full and ample manner as she had given the same to the said Thomas Haweis and his wife, Lady Erskine, and John Lloyd. - And after the death of any one of them who should be a minister, one who was a seceding minister or student should be appointed in his room, and if the deceased should not be a minister, one not a minister was to be appointed in his room, so that there might be always one minister and three persons not ministers, until the whole of her estate should be sold or disposed of. And after stating that the grand desire of her life had been the good of mankind, and the spread and promotion of the Gospel of the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ both abroad and at home; and that she had the most earnest desire and hope in her latest moments before and above all things, that the same might be promoted by all possible means, and in regard she knew that devises to charitable uses were contrary to law, she thereby declared the foregoing devise and bequest to be made by her, freed and discharged from any such use, and that her trustees therein named and their successors to be appointed as aforesaid, should from time to time, either in the lifetime of her trustees therein named, or in the lifetime of their successors to be ap-

pointed as aforesaid, apply the annual produce, or sell and dispose of all or any part of her real and personal estate, and apply the produce thereof to such uses and for such purposes as they in their discretion should think proper, without any restriction, trust, or condition whatever: she relying on the almighty power and good grace of Jesus Christ, her God and Saviour, to dispose their hearts in all things which might tend most to his honour and glory and the real good of mankind, by the spreading and promoting his glorious and precious Gospel, as well abroad as at home."

By a codicil to the above will, bearing even date with it, the Countess, in a very striking and affecting manner, requested that her children would approve and confirm the disposition she had made of her effects.

No objection was made by Lady Huntingdon's family to the fulfilment of her wishes, in regard to the bequests made by her will; and accordingly her four trustees above-named entered into possession of her chapels, and employed the same for the purposes of religious worship, and acted in reference to the appointment and revocation of ministers, &c. in all respects as the Countess had done.

Dr. Haweis having survived his co-trustees, by a deed, bearing date 1st March, 1805, appointed Dr. Ford, and Messrs. Groves and Butcher, to fill up the vacancies occasioned in the trust: and on the deaths of Dr. Ford and Mr. Groves, Dr. Haweis and Mr. Butcher, by deed, dated 12th of June, 1807, appointed Messrs. Oldham and Langston to succeed them. But Lady Huntingdon's will, nor any of the other arrangements which she made, convey an idea of any particular control exercised by her over the Connexion. All the evangelical writers of the age in which she lived represent her as pre-eminent for humility, and surely nothing but incontrovertible evidence should warrant the supposition that she aspired at absolute dominion in the Church of God. It is certain that over *the Connexion, as a religious body*, she had no *legal* control: nor is there any evidence that she aimed at this. It was, of course, in her power to continue or withhold her patronage, her pecuniary support, and the use of the chapels, which were her property. But the last was not the most important item in her bounty toward the Connexion.

Lady Huntingdon possessed, however, a *moral* power over the Connexion, of uncommon extent, probably amounting to a *moral control*. Her decision, her zeal, her self-denial, her perseverance, her ardent devotion, her personal condescension and kindness, gained on the hearts of all who knew her, and especially of those who laboured under her patronage. The ministers and students, animated by her example, cheered by her

kindness, and supported, whenever it was necessary, by her bounty, were ready to do any thing that she desired, knowing that her desires glowed with zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls. The publicity of her character, as the patroness of every good work, and especially of the extensive preaching of the Gospel, caused the applications from all quarters to be made directly to her rather than to any other person. And as she possessed great constitutional vigour, with the unwearied perseverance necessary for multifarious correspondence, she became necessarily the centre and spring of all the itinerant movements of the Connexion—not by any assumption of power, but because there was no other person so able or so willing to carry on the arduous work. She, therefore, applied to the ministers and students to supply at different places, as openings occurred; her applications were resistless: made by a peeress of the realm, in a cause to which she herself had devoted her all, so as often to be reduced to a simple change of raiment, they went whithersoever she wished, even at the hazard of great and frequent privations. All this, however, was but *the voluntary homage of free minds to a soul of a superior order*. In this sense it is conceded that Lady Huntingdon had a most effective control over the affairs of the Connexion. There can be but little doubt that she was consulted on every occasion of importance, and that her approbation was a passport to popularity for any measure: but a legal control over the Connexion was not thought of: she had, in her personal character, a power that no law could have ever conferred.

Her conduct proved that she had no desire to obtain such legal control. From the year 1783, when the secession began, to her death, in 1791, her Ladyship possessed herself of only seven chapels as private property, and one of them was mortgaged to its full value as soon as bought; and yet, during that time, she was annually expending the whole of her income, excepting a scanty reserve for her personal expenses, in supporting the College and promoting the spread of the Gospel, and that income, for the last few years of her life, after her son's death, amounted to 2,200*l.* a-year. Now, if the sums which these two chapels cost, and the sums raised upon them, be carefully inquired into, it will be seen that the amount spent in this way made but a very small proportion of her expenditure; yet, this was the only way in which she was likely to acquire a *legal* control over the Connexion. Here was a practical illustration of her principles. She sought not to secure dominion to herself or her successors, but to have the Gospel of Christ extensively preached.

The term "Connexion" has been frequently used ; and here it may be proper to ascertain who were the *members* of the Connexion of the Countess of Huntingdon. It is presumed that no person, conversant with ecclesiastical language, will imagine that every hearer who attended the chapels, or even every person contributing to the support of them, could be considered, in the strict sense of the expression, a *member* of the Connexion. A common practice, in Lady Huntingdon's days among all who were called Methodists, whether Calvinistic or Wesleyan, was to form the converts into Societies, who generally met weekly, or, in some places, once a fortnight, for mutual edification. These corresponded, in nature and design, with the *churches* of the Congregational and Independent denomination, differing from them only in holding their meetings less frequently and in a less formal exercise of discipline. Their officers were less separated from the rest of the members than the deacons of Congregational churches, being, in many societies, chosen for a limited time rather than for life, as deacons generally are. What was the constitution of these Societies in the secession patronised by Lady Huntingdon will be best understood by consulting the rules proposed by the Ministers, recommended by her Ladyship, and printed for the use of the Societies, 1785. As they are not long, and the printed copies are become scarce, it may gratify the reader to be furnished with a copy at full length :—

Rules for the General Societies in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion.

Whereas, in all revivals of experimental religion in those places where the Gospel is preached with faithfulness and the power of the Holy Ghost, it has generally been found to be most desirable and expedient to promote and establish Society Meetings amongst those that are truly awakened, for the purpose of glorifying the Lord, building up each other in their most holy faith, and endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things ; thus walking as becometh those that profess godliness :

It has been, therefore, thought meet, by the consent and approbation of the elect Lady and Patroness of this Connexion, THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON, upon the recommendation of the principal Ministers, that such Society Meetings be established throughout the said Connexion, on a plan that shall be uniform, and, by the blessing of God, permanent throughout the whole work in the Secession.

And for the greater order and regulation of such Societies, it is proposed—

I. That no person be admitted a member of such Societies who is not a stated member of one of the congregations in her Ladyship's Connexion, and who does not hold those evangelical principles contained in our general Confession of Faith, as signed by our ministers at their ordination.

II. That no person be admitted at the first institution into those Societies as a member, but such as have been examined by the Ministers for the time being. And after the establishment of the Societies, they must be also approved by the majority of the members belonging to those respective Societies.

III. That such members meet together once a week, or at least once a fortnight, on a fixed day, in the respective chapels, or places where they assemble for public worship; and that such meetings begin about half an hour after six, and be ended at eight o'clock in the evening, from *Michaelmas* to *Lady-Day*; and begin at seven, and end at half an hour after eight, from *Lady-Day* to *Michaelmas*, to prevent giving offence to others by later hours.

IV. That whosoever is known to be absent four weeks successively, without assigning a sufficient cause to the Minister, may be excluded from the Society.

V. That, to prevent confusion, no person be removed from the Society but by the Minister for the time being; that the cause of such removal be assigned to the Society in general, unless there be any cases that make that inexpedient; then to two or three of the most judicious and experienced members of the Society, who shall, under their own hands, testify their approbation thereof, and thereby confirm the propriety and impartiality of the Minister's conduct herein. And that any member has liberty, beforehand, to apply to the Minister, in private, in case he judges such removal to be necessary.

VI. That an unhumiliated disputatious spirit, and a vain conformity to the world in card-playing, dancing, frequenting playhouses, and places of such like carnal amusements, horse-races, clubs for entertainment, or ale-houses and taverns, without necessary business, lightly and profanely using the name of the Lord in common conversation, and any other disorderly carriage, be sufficient grounds of complaint and removal.

VII. That the Minister for the time being attend such meetings, and give an exhortation suitable to the design hereof, and most adapted to the circumstances of the respective societies, and may call on any of the members, if he sees fit, to begin or conclude with prayer.

VIII. That every ordained Minister that is to stay for a time with such Societies, administer the communion to such Society only, at the first meeting after the first Lord's day that he preaches among them, previous notice being given thereof in the public congregation, on the said Lord's day preceding; and as much oftener, whilst he stays, as himself and the elder members of the Society shall judge convenient.

IX. That these General Society Meetings are not meant to take place of, and to abolish, yea rather they are intended to promote, encourage, and enliven any other occasional or stated meetings for prayer, or for mutual converse in smaller companies relative to their experience, as to the state of the soul, which are hereby much recommended, wherever they may have been already established, and conducted with convenience and propriety.

Lastly—That every person thus admitted into the Society have a ticket signed by the Minister for the time being, which is to admit such person, and no other; and that the name of every member be entered in a book kept for that purpose, and be read over in the public Society once a year, a month before the said tickets are renewed, which renewal is to be annual also.

N. B.—That in order to keep regularity and a stricter attention to the said Society, it is thought proper that six of the most judicious members shall be fixed upon to attend the society in turns; and a book, properly ruled, be kept, and one of the six members to check the names of such as do attend.

That if any member be sick, such member be visited, and if necessary shall be relieved; and in order to keep a fund for the said purpose, each member (if able) subscribe one penny per week.

That if any member be absent two meeting nights, one of the six members shall visit him, and know the cause.

T. WILLS.

W. TAYLOR.

Note.—It is also recommended by her Ladyship, to all who may belong to these various Societies, to consider them not only for their own advantage solely, but also, as putting it into their power, in the use of the means, to promote the cause of God universally in their several relations, connexions, and stations in life, as opportunity shall offer; particularly by recommending to others to hear the preaching of the truths of the Gospel, and by dispersing of books; thus endeavouring to commend and enforce, with all zeal and faithfulness, the importance and actual necessity of the great and only salvation of Christ; which conduct, together with their exemplary lives and conversations, will most effectually evidence the sincerity of their own profession.

College, Wales, January, 1785.

S. HUNTINGDON.

Considerable property has, from time to time, been bequeathed to Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. Mrs. James Payne Haweis, formerly Miss Orton, who had long resided with Lady Huntingdon, by her will, dated October 18, 1794, bequeathed certain plantations in the West Indies, a copyhold house at Brighton, a leasehold messuage in Queen Ann-street, Marylebone, and a leasehold estate in Rotherhithe, to her executors in trust for the Connexion. After a Chancery suit of many years' duration, the trustees have been decreed to be entitled to a small estate at St. Kitts, devised to them by Mrs. Haweis, "for the support and propagation of the Gospel in the Countess of Huntingdon's chapels, or in any other chapels which her successors should patronize." Dr. Ford, of Highbury, bequeathed to the Connexion the interest on the residue of his estate, which is presumed to be very considerable. Mr. John Cooper also bequeathed one-half of the residue of his personal estate towards the support and maintenance of the College at Cheshunt, amounting to 170*l.* per annum, and the other half to the trustees of the Connexion of the Countess of Huntingdon.

Thomas Hawkes, Esq., of Piccadilly, whose will was proved in 1810, gave to the College at Cheshunt, 1000*l.*; and for the relief of aged and infirm ministers and widows in the Connexion, 500*l.* Mrs. Rupertia Hill, in 1818, gave china, plate, and furniture to the use of chapels belonging to the College; also 1000*l.* to the College, and 1000*l.* to be divided between the poor ministers and congregations belonging to the Connexion, 100*l.* to the Travelling Fund, and 100*l.* to the Provident Fund. James Oldham Oldham, Esq., in 1822, gave to the College 1000*l.*; Provident Fund, 1000*l.*; and Travelling Fund, 500*l.*; also a considerable estate at Cobham, which is divided between the College and other institutions belonging to the Connexion. The late Richard Butterworth, Esq., 1225*l.* to the College, and a like sum to the Provident Fund. John Henry Mum, Esq., 3000*l.*; Mr. Richard Low, 1000*l.*; W. Hodson, Esq., 1000*l.*;

Lady Frances Shirley, 1618*l.*; Mrs. Elizabeth Hillier, 1000*l.*; with many smaller legacies of 500*l.*, &c. &c. &c., amounting altogether to above 22,000*l.*

The venerable Countess was now almost at the close of her long and arduous course. And, as the weather-beaten mariner, having through many hurricanes, storms and tempests, swelling billows, dangerous rocks and sands, gained his harbour in peace—so peacefully and quietly her Ladyship entered the haven of eternal rest and repose, truly experiencing the blessedness of those who die in the Lord, whose works follow them. Her praises will continue in the gate, till the creature, with the earth groaning for the accomplishment of the Lord's purposes, shall stagger to and fro; and time, sinking beneath the ponderous weight of age, be swallowed in eternity. O, happy period! Then all animosity shall subside; and we shall meet the venerable saint departed, and all the redeemed of the Lord, in perfect love, never more to part. But above all—for in Him all other loves must, yea, cannot but be lost—above all, superior bliss to all bliss! we shall see our adorable Redeemer face to face—we shall see him as he is, and be like him; ceaselessly and eternally enjoying his unutterably sweet smiles—the smiles of a God incarnate, brightening the face of his human nature, and continuing eternal life to his innumerable company of saints. If the love of God in Christ shed abroad in our hearts, is now so exalted and superior pleasure and happiness, O what must it be, to be with him eternally in the state of glory!

The following letter to an old and intimate friend, the late Rev. Timothy Priestly, brother to the celebrated Dr. Priestly, written only a few months before her death, will give some idea of her views and feelings, now that she stood, as it were, on the brink of an eternal world:—

“Reverend Sir,—Consistency of character must ever claim respect; and that, in proportion to the just estimation due to the excellency of its object. While I therefore esteem your zealous and faithful labours as a servant of Jesus Christ, owned and honoured by success from him, I am led to look to the source from which this can only flow; even to the foundation that is laid; and which admits of no other happy one, either for our present comfort, or future security. Thus you and I, independent of modes, or the dogmas of particular establishments, are under the necessity of finding out, experimentally, that *one* true Christian church, formed and established by Jesus Christ himself, on the day of Pentecost; the existence of which still remains confined to the same powerful influence. We must not, therefore, wonder that natural ignorance, uninfluenced by this power, rejects the wisdom and mercy that unite in God's being manifest in the flesh.

"It is through this medium, of our own nature only, that instruction can be communicated to us in a way suitable to the weakness of our present condition; and is thus yielded to us by Him who is God over all, blessed for ever.

"This consideration revives every dead and dry sentiment of my heart. Here, also, every wild and warm imagination, intoxicated by pride and self-love, must end; and submit, not only to learn of the poorest and most afflicted man in our nature, but also to find in him, and in HIM ALONE, a suitable relief for all our misery; and, through the same medium, a free access to all divine and heavenly wisdom, whenever a sense of our own evil renders us sufficiently conscious of our wants.

"I fear to transgress the limits of a letter, and must therefore pass over much that is most delightful to me, and confine myself to the strength of the opposition against that great truth which is held forth to us in the state of a Pharisee. I should reasonably suppose this, well considered, would fill a feeling and sensible mind with a horror that would avoid, even with severity, the spirit, creed, whole life, doctrines and dispositions, of such a generation of vipers as our Lord terms them to be. Let us, then, beware of their leaven; and ever remember that a little of it leavens the whole lump; and by that means deludes the soul from the glory, simplicity, and divine sweetness of the Gospel: which would lead us, as poor sinful worms, to find out the daily food of immortality in Jesus Christ alone. It is from this rock (if we are the happy inhabitants of it) we can only sing—it is here that the truth, in the abstract, can only be found to satisfy the sad variety of human miseries, and finally separate us from ourselves; and it is here, also, that every earthly sacrifice is counted as nothing; while all our spiritual and rational capacities become witnesses of such immutable evidence of divine mercy and eternal glory, so secured.

"Thus faith, that faith which is the substance, or subsistence, of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, must carry the day; and by it walking in the light, as God is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin; while his heavenly and divine Spirit, daily carrying us forward, leads us experimentally into those various states, which he himself has declared to be truly blessed.

"My prayers are earnest for the success of your publication,* which I believe will be a blessing to the church of Christ, as the effect of truth, and the power of it ever will; and my esteem for you makes me hope the length of this letter, and the freedom with which I have communicated my sentiments, will only be considered as a natural effect of that friendship and invariable regard with which I remain, Reverend Sir, your ever faithful and obliged friend,

"Spafields, April 26th, 1790.

"S. HUNTINGDON."

The closing period of the life of a woman so honoured of God, and useful in her generation, is naturally inquired after

* A Commentary on the Holy Bible, then publishing.

with eagerness ; and every trait, like the falling mantle of Elijah, gathered up, in hope that it may communicate to us a portion of her spirit. Happily, we have something to gratify more than curiosity ; and see the peaceful sunshine of her latest hours when ready to sink beneath the present horizon of life, to shine in a brighter world of eternal day. May our last end be like hers.

It must be acknowledged this short sketch can by no means do justice to her memory, as being so much inferior to her excellence ; the account, however, so far as it goes, has the stamp of veracity, and will be read with thankfulness, delight, and encouragement, by all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

How pleasing, useful, and consolatory to be informed in what manner this venerable woman concluded her life of fidelity and zeal, which was wholly employed in promoting the knowledge of the glorious Redeemer, and the salvation of the immortal souls purchased by his blood, and entered into glory, when the days of her pilgrimage were ended ! Blessed with a solemn assurance of her interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, she found that the comforts of religion softened the bed of sickness, and soothed the agonies of dissolution. Though sensible she was bidding a final adieu to time, and just launching out to the abyss of eternity, her God sustained her in the greatest extremity—she overcame the last enemy by the blood of the Lamb :—

“ Her God sustained her in her final hour—
Her final hour brought glory to her God ! ”

In the last and trying season, she afforded an eminent instance of the support which the doctrines of grace (for which she so earnestly contended) could impart. She was then consoled, not by reflections on her own qualifications and commendable actions, which indeed were many and eminent, but entirely by Jehovah ; his righteousness and salvation granted to her in the word of grace. She saw nothing in herself to recommend her to God, whether duties, endeavours, or attainments. On the contrary, her soul would have been overwhelmed within her, if she had not had a *free* Saviour, and *free* salvation to lay hold upon, as the gift of God to her as a sinful and polluted creature. Those beautiful words of Dr. Watts were very applicable to her :—

“ A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall ;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all ! ”

The powerful, lively, effectual application of divine grace to her soul, by the declaration of the Gospel, was the ground of her comfort and hope. Her death-bed peace was not that of a righteous or innocent person, but of a redeemed sinner,—of one who saw herself to be guilty, condemned, and vile beyond expression, but believed herself *complete in Christ*. She looked not only with composure, but delight, on the grave; and groaned earnestly for her heavenly habitation. She had constantly, to use Dr. Young's expression,—

“One eye on death, and one full fix'd on heaven.”

A short time before her last confinement, one of the clergymen whom she honoured with her confidence, spending a day with her as he passed through London, she spoke of herself in a strain so remarkably affecting, that he could not but mention it afterwards.

The subject of the conversation was the cause of Christ, which she always had so deeply at heart; and that led to the state of her own mind and expectations.

Her expressions were to this effect, but more forcible than these feeble traces of them:—

“I see myself a poor worm.

“Drawing near Him, what hope could I entertain, if I did not know the efficacy of his blood, and turned as a prisoner of hope to this strong-hold?

“How little could anything of mine give a moment's rest to a departing soul?—so much sin and self-mixing with the best, and always so short of what we owe!

“'Tis well for us that he can pity and pardon; and we have confidence that he will do so.

“I confess, my dear friend, I have no hope but that which inspired the dying malefactor at the side of my Lord; and I must be saved in the same way, as freely, as fully, or not at all.”

The friend said, “Madam, I cordially join you, and feel with you, that though our lives may be devoted to the work of Jesus, and our deaths the consequence of the service, it is not to these sacrifices we should look for comfort in a dying hour.” She replied, “No, verily;”—and enlarging on the idea of the mixture of infirmity and corruption which tarnished all our best-meant services, she added,—

“That a sinner could only rest satisfactorily on one foundation, and would find nothing in the best works of his best day, that he could dare preduce before God for its own sake—sufficiently blessed and secure, if he could but cry, God be merciful to me a sinner; and let me be found accepted in the Beloved; and complete in him.”

To these, in the course of a long conversation, were added many like words of truth and grace.

To a paper of importance, written a few months before her last illness, were subjoined these words:—

“—— And as I have always lived the poor unworthy pensioner of the infinite bounty of my Lord God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, so I do hereby declare, that all my present peace, and my future hope of glory, either in whole or in part, depend wholly, fully, and finally, upon his alone merits, committing my soul into his arms unreservedly, as a subject of his sole mercy to all eternity.”

When the blood-vessel broke, which was the commencement of her illness in November, she said to Lady Anne Erskine, on being asked how she did, “I am well; all is well—well for ever. I see, wherever I turn my eyes, whether I live or die, nothing but victory.”

Towards the close she, with great emphasis, repeated often, “The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. O, Lady Anne, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh!” Adding, “The thought fills my soul with joy unspeakable, whether I shall see his glory more abundantly appear, or whether it be an intimation of my own departure to him.”

At another time,—“All the little ruffles and difficulties which surround me, and all the pains I am exercised with in this poor body, through mercy affect not the settled peace and joy of my soul.”

A day or two before her last illness, just as she had come from her room to her elbow-chair, she broke out in these memorable words:—

“The Lord hath been present with my spirit this morning in a remarkable manner: what he means to convey to my mind I know not; it may be my approaching departure; my soul is filled with glory; I am as in the element of heaven itself.”

They who knew how constantly her conversation was in heaven, will conclude, that those who were around her might fill volumes, instead of pages, with her energetic expressions; but she forbade it, as well as the publication of her papers and correspondence.

Weakened by complicated disorders, and enfeebled by age, when about a week preceding her departure she was confined on the bed of languishing, it could not but afford surprise to all around her, that the vigour of her mind was unabated, and her intellects as clear as at any period of her life. The same earnest concern for the work of God, and the advancement of

the kingdom of his dear Son, abroad and at home, occupied all her thoughts.

Anxious that an attempt to send the Gospel to Otaheite, in the South Seas, should succeed, to a friend engaged in that labour of love, who was sitting by her bed-side, she began to express her earnest desire that it might be accomplished. He with difficulty prevailed on her to drop the subject, lest talking earnestly might interrupt the rest which was desirable for her; assuring her that every means would be pursued to effect so desirable an event; "and to-morrow," said he, "your Ladyship shall hear what can be done." And when the next day difficulties were raised, and the two persons who had engaged to go as Missionaries demurred, unless they could be ordained in the Established Church, which was refused them; she said, on being informed of it, "We shall find others, I doubt not;" and gave immediate orders to her Secretary, Mr. Best, to write the following note to the person engaged in the pursuit:—

"Sir,—Lady Anne has mentioned to my Lady what has passed respecting the young men. She very much approves of what has been done, and what you have determined; and desires me to say, 'Assure him of my affectionate regard; and tell him, it is impossible for me to express my love and honour for his zeal and faithfulness.' Two letters are gone by her order to Mr. Lewis, and another student, to come up immediately, if they remain in the same disposition they once expressed. I remain, &c. "G. BEST."

So warmly was her heart interested in this work to the very last moment!

About an hour only before her death, she said to Lady Anne Erskine, who watched her with assiduous attention, and for many nights and days never quitted her room, "Is Charles's* letter come?" (She had sent for him to supply her chapel in Spafelds, when Mr. Jones, of Langan, returned home). On being answered "It is;" she said, "it must be opened, to see if he comes." When Lady Anne said, "I will go and open it,"—she added, "To know if he comes, that's the point." So anxiously were the cares of her work impressed upon her dying heart; and often she had added, when speaking of the people in her Connexion, as her children, "I feel for their souls."

During the whole of her illness, her pains never made her impatient, but she seemed more concerned about those who attended her, than about herself. She said, tenderly, to Lady Anne Erskine and Miss Scutt,† whose long, faithful, and tender

* Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala.

† Miss Hannah Scutt was of a respectable family at Brighton, where her

attachment to her is well known, "I fear I shall be the death of you both (alluding to their constant watching with her); it will be but a few days more."

She appeared, during the tedious nights and days of pain and sickness, engaged in prayer, and animated with thankfulness for the unutterable mercies which she had experienced; saying, "I am encircled in the arms of love and mercy:" and at another time, "I long to be at home; O! I long to be at home." A little before she died, she said repeatedly, "I shall go to my Father this night;" and shortly after, "Can he forget to be gracious? Is there any end of his loving-kindness?"

Dr. Lettsom had visited her between four and five. Shortly after, her strength failed, and she appeared departing. Alarmed, they summoned up a friend, who was waiting anxiously below; he took her hand—it was bedewed with sweat—he applied his fingers to the pulse—it had ceased to beat—and that instant she breathed her last sigh, as he leaned over her, and fell asleep in Jesus.

Almost her last words were,—*My work is done; I have nothing to do but to go to my Father.*" Thus the "vital spark quitted its mortal frame" to join those "who have come out of great tribulation, having washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Her Ladyship died at her house in Spafields, London, next door to the chapel, June 17th, 1791, in the *eighty-fourth* year of her age, and was interred in the family vault at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire. How delightful to hear this venerable woman, at the close of such a long Christian course, express her unshaken confidence in God her Saviour, and thus triumphantly enter into eternal rest!

"Come, but with hallow'd feet approach, and view
This Christian woman's death! Her end is peace!
Ah! with what silent eloquence it pleads
The cause of Truth, flashing conviction's glare
E'en on the haughtiest, boldest Infidel!
What tranquil pleasures sit upon her brow,
Where slowly trickles the cold sweat of death!
What sacred raptures—what immortal joys
Burst from her lips, and sparkle in her eye!"

Clad with the whole armour of God, and washed from every defilement in the precious blood of Jesus, she was enabled to triumph over the last enemy: Death lay stingless before her

brother was a banker. She died in 1815, and bequeathed a legacy of 50*l.* to Lady Huntingdon's College. Her sister, Mrs. Davies, died in 1817, and likewise left some property to the College.

faith in the great Redeemer, who died for the offences, and was raised again for the justification of the ungodly. But, oh! what tongue can describe, or heart conceive, the nature of that peace which her disembodied spirit entered upon! The instant the thread of life was cut, and life's uncertain lamp ceased to burn, her soul, disengaged from the cumbrous clod of earth in which it was imprisoned, flew to regions above, and towered away on the wings of cherubim to that celestial city whither it had often fled before on the wings of *faith*, and *hope*, and strong *desire*, while we may suppose every golden harp was new strung to hail her welcome to the holy city; and every voice exerted in singing, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous which keepeth the truth may enter in."

What an unspeakable glorious exchange from her former state!—Sickness and pain for everlasting rest and peace!—a ruinous tabernacle for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!—a howling wilderness for the heavenly Canaan, the palace of angels, the city of God!—the groanings of corruption and sin for the songs of the redeemed round the star-paved throne!—the chamber of sickness for the regions of unfading health!—the cross for a crown of glory, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away!—and earth, with all its distractions, varieties, vicissitudes, and wars, for the beatitudes of heaven, and the rapturous enjoyment of the vision of God!

Dr. Lettsom's letter to Lady Anne Erskine, the day following, speaks the worthy sentiments of his own heart, and the satisfaction so noble an example afforded him:—

"Dear Lady Anne Erskine,—I deeply sympathize with thee, and all the family in Christ, in the removal of that evangelic woman, so lately among us, the Countess of Huntingdon. Your souls were so united, and your affections so endeared together, that I cannot but feel in a peculiar manner on thy account, lest the mournful state of thy mind may undermine thy constitution, and endanger a life spent in mitigating the painful sufferings of our deceased friend whilst living. Her advanced age and debilitated frame had long prepared my mind for an event which has at length deprived the world of its brightest ornament. How often have we, when sitting by her sick bed, witnessed the faithful composure with which she has viewed this awful change! Not with the fearful prospect of doubt—not with the dreadful apprehension of the judgment of an offended Creator; her's was all peace within; a tranquillity and cheerfulness which conscious acceptance alone could convey. How often have we seen her, elevated above the earth and earthly things, uttering this language, 'My work is done; I have nothing to do but to go to my heavenly Father!' Let us, therefore, under a firm conviction of her felicity, endeavour to follow her, as she followed her Redeemer. Let us be thankful that she was preserved to

advanced age, with the perfect exercise of her mental faculties ; and that, under long and painful days and nights of sickness, she never repined, but appeared constantly animated in prayer and thankfulness for the unutterable mercies she experienced. When I look back upon the past years of my attendance, and connect with it the multitudes of others whom my profession has introduced me to, I feel consolation in acknowledging, that of all the daughters of affliction, she exhibited the greatest degree of Christian composure that ever I witnessed ; and that submission to Divine allotment, however severe and painful, which nothing but Divine aid could inspire.

“ It was on the 12th of this month that our dear friend appeared more particularly indisposed, and afforded me those apprehensions of danger which on the 17th finally terminated her bodily sufferings. I had, on former occasions of her illness, observed, that when she expressed ‘ a hope and desire to go to her heavenly Father ’—for this was often her language—she usually added some solitudes upon her mind respecting her children, as she spoke of her people in religious profession ; adding, ‘ But I feel for the good of their souls.’ When under the utmost debility of body, she has continued this subject in animated and pious conversation, extending her views to all mankind ; she has expressed a firm persuasion in the gradual and universal extension of virtue and religion. Wherever a fellow-creature existed, so far her prayers extended. In her last illness, I never heard her utter a desire to remain longer on earth. A little before she died, she repeatedly said, in a feeble voice, just to be heard, ‘ I shall go to my Father this night,’ adding, ‘ Has God forgot to be gracious ? or is there any end of his loving-kindness ?’ It was on this day she conversed a little on the subject of sending missionaries to Otaheite, in the South Seas, in the pious hope of introducing Christianity among that mild but uninformed race of people : indeed her whole life seemed devoted to one great object—the glory of God, and the salvation of his creatures.

“ Basinghall-street, June 18th, 1791. “ JOHN COAKLEY LETTSOM.”

The mournful event was improved at Spafields chapel, on Lord’s-day, July 3rd, 1791, by the Rev. David Jones, rector of Langan, who preached from Genesis l. 24, “ And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die : and God will surely visit you.” When this sermon was delivered, Mr. Jones had no intention of publishing it : but meeting with a spurious edition, he was induced to send it to the press. When speaking of the distressing sensations occasioned by her removal, he observes :—

“ You will say, we have lost a great mother in Israel ; but the God of Israel lives. If he take away a Moses, he will give a Joshua ; there is no loss at the hands of our God : no, sirs, let us comfort ourselves with this. If he take away an humble and resigned Eli, he will soon favour the Church with a Samuel ; if he take away an eminent Elijah, behold in his hand, for the comfort of the Church, Elisha, with a double portion of his spirit. Indeed, were we to judge according to human wisdom, *that* was the greatest loss that ever happened under the sun,

when the presence of *God in the flesh* upon earth was taken away. But was it so? He says, It is expedient for you that I go away. If so, all is for the best: for now God, *by his spirit*, comes among his people. Let us always remember this truth, that God's *Spirit* will exalt Jesus Christ more in the Church than any instrument whatever; and this the blessed Spirit will do when priests and prophets are no more.

"Now, my dear brethren, weigh this truth well: meditate on it, and you will discover the *glorious* side of this dark cloud. Hung around as the chapel is with mourning, methinks I am now speaking, as it were in the gloomy regions of death; but my mind feels as carried beyond the limits of mortality; and I see at a distance through this gloom which surrounds me, a small opening appears like that bright dawn of an eternal day. Blessed be God, whatever the sensations of my heart may be, on this solemn occasion, I can now proclaim victory over death, and that even in its dismal shades. As for you, my hearers, now is the time for the exercise of your faith in the resurrection of our glorious and triumphant Lord. When angels were seen in the grave, they had not on this gloomy garb; no they were dressed in *white robes*, emblems of the eternal victories of Jesus. These angels appear apparelled and adorned with glorious emblems of Immanuel's victory. In this sense, I could wish all this chapel was hung to-day with the most costly white satin upon earth. But I forbear; rejoicing in the truth that the garments of our victory are yet in reserve for us; dear Lady Huntingdon is just retired to wait for them. In this she shall not be disappointed, neither shall you, my brethren, who unfeignedly trust in the Son of God."

After mentioning the loss which the Church of Christ sustained by the removal of this "mother in Israel," he concludes with the following character of her Ladyship:—

"That religion which is not of God alone, as a friend lately observed, is like the fruit of our hot-houses, which, however pleasing to the eye, and, in some measure, sweet to the taste, can never be compared with what is produced by the genial powers of the sun itself. Our dear departed friend, the Countess of Huntingdon, was peculiarly blessed with a clear knowledge of the necessity of the Spirit's power and influence to make the Gospel successful in the world. I refer you to that letter, written by her own hand, and from her own heart, some few years since, to one of her students.* The spirit and glory of the Gospel shine forth in every line of it. That religion which was established on the day of Pentecost (and which is the only true religion of Christ), was her only support and constant delight: it weaned her soul from all the perishing trifles of this world, and is her glory for ever. I have heard her, time after time, sweetly declare,—That our religion, the religion of Jesus, grows not in the garden of Nature, but comes down from heaven, and will never, never leave us till it sets us down

* See letter to a student, in a former chapter.

at its blessed source, where we shall drink of its ineffable pleasures for eternal ages.' Saved and refreshed by this living fountain on earth, she was enabled to devote her ALL—boldly will I say ALL—for near fifty years, to the glory of Jesus, and the eternal good of lost souls. Enriched with this religion from God, she was proof against the smiles, as well as the frowns, of this transitory and delusive world. The one she trampled under her feet—the other she bore with invincible patience and fortitude. I was just going to say, that she was a martyr of fifty years standing; I am not afraid to declare it; from the first moment that she commenced a follower of Jesus, has she not been a mark for the ill-treatment of this censorious world, not only from the vile and profane, but also from carnal professors? False reports from earth and hell flew around her like envenomed arrows. But clothed as she was with the armour of God, like her Master, she proved invincible; all but her mortal part, which, worn out with watchings and cares for the good of others, gently sunk into the bosom of its mother earth, whilst its active inhabitant arose to uninterrupted and eternal joys. To the glory of her Master be it spoken, she was taken from the field of battle, in the midst of action, to her Lord's presence, to be with him for ever and ever. Men of great talents in the ministry, when speaking of her usefulness for Christ, will meet with a field far wider than the reach of their most gifted eloquence. This poor worm can think it no enthusiasm to declare, that she was the greatest woman, in the cause of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that ever lived in the world. Nor is he ashamed to own, that he has been a *pensioner* on her bounty for many years: she has comforted me in a spiritual and in a temporal sense. If any Doeg should here object, and say, 'Your service was for money, blessed be God, I can honestly reply, 'No!' Every farthing she gave me has been faithfully applied for the interest of the Gospel. God has honoured me with her acquaintance for near thirty years, and I have been with her in many of her public excursions for the spread of the Gospel. We have often met with the enmity and scorn of the world; yet for our support, Jesus, the leader of his despised host, has frequently refreshed our souls with the sweet cordials of his Gospel of peace, and thus enabled us to hold on in the day of battle. But now she has taken the wing for a better world, where the enemy's arrows can never reach her; these are levelled at us who are left behind, in a world of much tribulation and sorrow.

"I shall only add, we want no marble monuments to perpetuate her memory; this will remain, indelibly remain, on those precious souls, who, through her instrumentality, have been brought from darkness to light, and from under the power of Satan to God.

"She is gone!—we are left in the field of blood. But our Captain is still at the head of his army, and he will lead us on from conquering to conquer. He who kept her by his power through faith unto salvation, will do the same by us who trust in his holy name.

"Before I conclude, suffer me to leave this humble advice with you all, especially the managers and hearers at this chapel, 'Be still' (Ps. xlv. 10); a short but very comprehensive exhortation to the people of God, under all their trials and sufferings. You have heard what is

said of the believer (Isa. xxviii. 16), 'He that believeth shall not make haste.' I do not wish you to be inactive as stocks or stones; no, but be patient, resigned, composed. Be as men knowing themselves to be in the hand and under the care of God. Be still, be silent, be humble. But is that sufficient? I will just add, 'And know that the Lord is God.' Be still, in the view of his sovereignty, of his power, of his wisdom, and of his faithfulness.' 'All shall work together for our good.' Be still, and wait upon God. Do not mark out your own way; but wait patiently upon God, and he will open the right way before you.

"Another advice I leave with you.—Whenever it pleases him to visit you, I beg you will make much of his visits. Whatever he has promised he will perform. Let no love of sin disturb his presence with you; and when you are troubled on account of his withdrawals, cry with the Church (Jer. xiv. 8), 'Why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?'

"With respect to the cause of Christ among you at this place, though dear Lady Huntingdon is no more your support, yet know that Jesus reigneth. The burden is his; trust in him, and he will carry it on, and will bless and comfort you. Be not dismayed; trust in Christ. There is enough in him to support you under the darkest and most gloomy dispensation of his providence. The work is his, and remember it is your honour and comfort to trust in him. Trust him, and go on rejoicing. Lady Huntingdon has been your kind friend for many years. Now she is gone home to her blessed Lord. Mourn not for her, but rejoice, and keep on your way, looking unto Jesus. Reflect with gratitude on the goodness of God to her, even to the last period of her life. Not many days before her last illness, she said to me, 'O, Jones! my soul is filled with glory, my soul is filled with glory!' and many other sweet things, which I cannot now recollect. Remember! Jesus lives, though friends die; Jesus, our Head and Captain. 'Because I live, he shall live also.' This will turn our mourning into joy, our black cloth into white robes, and our hosannahs into hallelujahs for ever and ever. May the Lord Jesus Christ enable us to rely on his strength, that we may also give up ourselves and our all to his glory! May we rejoice in his salvation day by day! Let us commit our every care to him, and he will supply our every want. I cannot but reflect frequently on these words of our blessed Lord to his disciples (Luke xxii. 35), 'When I sent you without purse, and scrip, or shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.' Should this question be proposed to the faithful followers of Jesus, at this day, the reply would be the same: 'You have been sorely tried, old travellers for Zion; but lacked ye any thing? Nothing, Lord.' Goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life; and now, O Lord, give us to dwell in thy house for ever! Amen!"

The decease of a character so eminently useful in the Church of God was matter of concern to many of the churches, and a tribute to her memory was paid, not only in the churches in her own Connexion, but by ministers of other denominations. The

Rev. T. Priestley published a sermon on her death, which he had preached before the church in Jewin-street, July 24th, 1791. It was called "A crown of glory preferable to the riches of this world." The Rev. J. Dawson, of Evesham, preached and published a sermon on the same occasion, entitled "The riches of faith; or, the Christian conqueror: with some account of her life and dying moments." Mr. Aldridge likewise published a sermon on her death; and Mr. Wills preached one at Silver-street chapel, when the pulpit and desk were hung with black, and continued so one month. The Psalms and lessons were selected for the occasion, and a proper solemnity was observed in every part of the service. The text was taken from Judges v. 7, "A mother in Israel." In the discourse Mr. Wills introduced a brief sketch of the life and labours of the venerable Countess in the Lord's vineyard, and spoke of her in the most affectionate terms.

Born to a title, and highly elevated in the rank of nobility; endowed with exterior advantages, nor less with intellectual ones; she was enabled, at a time of life when the mind tends to every sensual gratification, to resist the fascinating phalanx of dissipation, extravagance, gaming, luxury, infidelity, and profaneness, choosing to cast her lot among the despised followers of the Lamb of God. No partizan of a sect, or contracted by the narrow prejudices of bigotry and superstition, but with the most enlarged sentiments, she received those as the servants of Christ who loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Her philanthropy to the souls and bodies of the human race, stands almost unparalleled. Her generosity, uncircumscribed, extended above the ordinary rules of social conduct, and flamed with a rapidity not to be comprehended within the precise marks of formal precepts. With a vigorous principle infused in her soul, it expanded her actions beyond the caprice of vanity or the anticipated honours of posthumous celebrity.

Though she devoted the whole of her income to the Gospel, yet it is not a little surprising how it sufficed for the heavy expenditure which she necessarily incurred. She often involved herself in expenses for building chapels which she found it burdensome to discharge; but Divine Providence always brought her honourably through her engagements, and provided a supply when her own purse was exhausted.

A gentleman who assisted her in the management of Spafford's chapel, called one day at her house, to expostulate with her on the impropriety of entering into engagements for another chapel in the metropolis, without having the means of honourably fulfilling them. Before he left the house, her letters ar-

rived. As she opened one her countenance brightened, and her tears began to flow—the letter was to this effect: “An individual who had heard of Lady Huntingdon’s exertion to spread the Gospel, requests her acceptance of the enclosed draft, to assist her in the laudable undertaking.” The draft was for *five hundred pounds*—the exact sum for which she stood engaged. “Here (said she), take it, and pay for the chapel, and be no longer faithless, but believing.”

Lady Huntingdon’s person, endowments, and spirit, were all uncommon. To show that religion is neither a melancholy nor unpolished thing, view this eminent woman as a member of society. Dignity and ease most sweetly met in her. How accomplished, how refined, how elegant, how engaging in manners! How commanding of respect, yet how gracefully affable, even with the meanest who sought her advice! What a friend, while unwounded in her love! A most affectionate wife and tender mother. What honesty and justice in her dealings! What a heart open to the wants of her fellow-creatures; full of sympathy and relieving love! How enlarged her mind in planning; how liberal and noble in executing! How steady and persevering in her pursuit; not to be frightened nor diverted, where her Saviour’s glory and the good of souls were in view! What strength of understanding! How forcible, nervous and convincing, in reasoning; with a mind the most capacious and comprehending, yet the most humble! In affliction, patient, submissive and resigned; with Christian fortitude of mind superior to misfortune!

Possessed of the nicest sense of honour, she may have seemed harsh and unforgiving; yet, from what she has often said, and what has been seen in her, she was ever ready to receive again to favour, where the person returned with openness and real humility.

She had studied man in courts and in private life; and next in her own heart. She saw through his meanness, flattery, artifice, and policy. She loved the open, honest mind, and despised the artifice of the mysterious and proud; yet ever ready to convince of the folly, and to reclaim. In fine, she was a most amiable pattern in all relative and social virtues and duties; yet to crown all, she was herself nothing, and Jesus Christ all in all.

She saw, she knew, she felt her infirmities. To say she had none, would not be to speak becomingly of the character of a sinner saved by grace, or agreeably to every quickened soul’s experience. She well knew that perfection is not attainable in this life, and that we cannot know any here, except the perfec-

tion of the sacrifice of the atonement of Christ and his righteousness. We are complete in him, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?

With a heroism and magnanimity consistently uniform in the cause of God, she astonished and arrested the surprise of her adversaries. Possessed with the grace of Christ, shielded with a divine panoply, and with heaven in view, she was invulnerable to the assaults of an injurious and malevolent world, never seeking ignoble ease or shrinking from her post, but bearing the toils and cares with a becoming dependence on the Almighty's strength.

Lady Huntingdon had often in her life-time mentioned, that from the first moment God set her soul at liberty, she had such a thirst for the conversion of souls, she compared herself to a ship in full sail before the wind, and that she was carried on by such a divine influence as was not easily to be described. The late Mr. Priestley visited her frequently during her last days.

"The last time (says he) that I was in company with her, she told me she had been that day filled with Divine consolation. I cannot tell you, says she, in what light I now see those words—*If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.* To have in this room such company, and to have such an eternal prospect, I see this subject now in a light impossible to be described. She would mention death, and compare it to the putting off of her cloak; and would say, *I know my capacity will be then enlarged; but I am now as sensible of the presence of God, as I am of the presence of those I have with me.* She knew experimentally the words of the Psalmist, 'At midnight will I arise and give praise unto the.'"

Animated with the brightening prospect before her, the venerable Countess closed a life of the most unbounded intrepidity in the cause of God, and the most distinguished achievements in the cause of evangelical religion. She stands unrivalled for a life of peculiar usefulness and devotedness to God. Her disembodied spirit is now beholding and adoring that Jesus, whom, having not seen, she loved; and can, uninterruptedly, rejoice upon every accession of the fallen race to seek the mediatorial diadem. Thousands, living and dying, blessed God for her, as having been the happy means of bringing them out of darkness into marvellous light; and multitudes, converted to God by the instrumentality of ministers in that Connexion of which she was the patroness, have met her in the regions of glory, to rejoice together in the presence of God and the Lamb. Encom-

passed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us not be faint or weary in well-doing: soon we shall follow the ransomed of the Lord, and join in one unison before the unveiled Deity, salvation to God that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever!

“IN VERITATE VICTORIA.”

CHAPTER LV.

Cheshunt College—Mr. Nicholson—Opening of the College—Services on the occasion—Appeal to those educated at Cheshunt—Letter from Dr. Haweis—Letter from Lady Huntingdon to a Student—List of Persons educated at Cheshunt—List of the Trustees to the present day—Lady Anne Erskine succeeds Lady Huntingdon—Anecdote—her Early Piety—Last Illness and Death—Funeral—Epitaph.

ON the death of Lady Huntingdon, in 1791, the four persons to whom she bequeathed her chapels, in the hope that they would take measures for carrying on the work of God in the same zealous and disinterested manner as she herself had done, seem to have thought it best to consign this difficult task chiefly to the superintendence of one of their number, Lady Anne Agnes Erskine. Early in the period when her Ladyship was called on to superintend the affairs of the Connexion, a most important step was taken by its friends, that of establishing a place for the education of pious young men for the ministry of the Gospel, at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, instead of the College at Trevecca, in Wales, the lease of which had expired.

Prejudices have been entertained by some serious persons against a well-educated and learned ministry; they have observed that a great proportion of the men eminent for science, are far from being conspicuous for piety; and hence, have been tempted to imagine, that grace and education are inimical to each other. They have observed, also, that some very highly-honoured men—men whose ministry God has signally blessed,—have been such as could make but little pretensions to literature; and from this circumstance they have deduced the conclusion, that learning is not of much importance to the Christian ministry. These ideas were probably more prevalent some years ago than they are at present; the lives of such men as Henry Martyn, have shown that the simplicity and humility of a little

child, united to the fervour of a martyr, may well consist with high eminence in learning and superior vigour of intellect; and have impressed many minds with a conviction that learning, when sanctified, is a powerful auxiliary to ministerial usefulness. The extraordinary attention, too, which, since the establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society, has been paid to the translation of the sacred Scriptures into different languages, a task which, it is evident, could not possibly be well performed without a considerable share of biblical and philological knowledge, must satisfy even the most prejudiced, that, since the original languages* of the Scriptures have ceased to be vernacular, God has himself ordained that the nations of the earth should be indebted to sanctified learning for the very key of knowledge; not to insist on the awful fact, that infidelity has of late years, with Satanic ingenuity, set in array against God's Holy Book a variety of engines, which can only be destroyed, so far as human agency is concerned, by the researches of learned men.*

The situation of Cheshunt College appears to have been fixed on, under the directing hand of that God whose glory was sincerely sought by its founders. Being about twelve miles from London, it was placed beyond the polluting exhalations of that city, and yet not so far from the residences of its friends as to prevent their frequent visits, or the exercise of their vigilant care. The buildings and grounds purchased for this purpose are delightfully situated near the banks of the New River. May the Lord himself write over its gates "*Jehovah Shammah*"—the Lord is there—fit designation for those shady walks and sequestered chambers, where, already many a youth has met with God and enjoyed his special presence. O, Cheshunt, dear to memory still—peace be within thy walls, prosperity within thy palaces; for our brethren and companions' sakes will we now say, Peace be within thee!

A sum of money, amounting to several hundred pounds, had been collected, towards the close of Lady Huntingdon's life, with the anticipation of removing the students from Trevecca to some other situation, and the premises at Cheshunt were opened as a place of religious education on the 24th of August, 1792, being the anniversary of the opening of Trevecca College, and also of the birth-day of its revered and lamented foundress.

The seminary at Trevecca was supported at the sole expense

* A remarkable illustration of this observation has lately occurred in a reply, by the eminently learned and candid Dr. Pye Smith, drawn up at the request of the London Christian Instruction Society, in answer to a blasphemous infidel manifesto.

of the Countess, till it pleased God to take her home to himself. About four years previous to that event, a few friends to the Gospel, reflecting on the great utility of the institution, the many faithful and eminent servants of Christ it had produced, and the probable want of a fund to carry it on when deprived of the support of its noble foundress, formed the design of continuing and perpetuating the same by subscription. Their intention being communicated to the Countess, she most cordially approved thereof. Rules and regulations were drawn up, and signed by her Ladyship and the friends who assisted in the design. Seven trustees were chosen, on whom the future care of the College, after her Ladyship's decease, was to devolve, with power to choose successors.

The next concern, and the most important, was to procure a gentleman of distinguished piety and learning to superintend and direct the studies of such young men as should be received into this house of instruction, as there had not been any settled tutor at the College in Wales since the Countess's decease, or for a short time before. The person who first occupied that important station at Cheshunt College, was the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, a clergyman of the Church of England, and a man eminently qualified for the office, who proved an honour to the institution, a blessing to the students put under his care, and to the neighbourhood where he resided.

The house at Trevecca was given up at Lady-day, 1792; the furniture of which, with the library and communion plate, having been bequeathed by Lady Huntingdon for the use of the College, were removed to Cheshunt, where Mr. Nicholson, the president, arrived the 13th of July, and the two first students, William Jones and William Kemp, were admitted the 1st of August; five others followed shortly after.

The religious services which attended the opening of the College were peculiarly interesting. Four senior ministers, all of whom had been educated at Trevecca, conducted the services; viz., Rev. W. F. Platt, Rev. Anthony Crole, Rev. John Eyre, and Rev. Lemuel Kirkman. The great parlour of the College, an elegant room, twenty-nine feet long, and nineteen feet wide, now used as a chapel, having been previously furnished with seats for about one hundred and fifty persons, the Right Hon. Lady Anne Agnes Erskine, executrix and most intimate friend of the late Countess of Huntingdon, (the original foundress of the institution,) was seated as her representative, at the upper end of the room; from whence, in a line extending to the lower end, sat the treasurer, deputy treasurer, the rest of the trustees, (all of whom were present except Mr. Lloyd,) the president in

his gown and cassock, and the following seven students in proper students' gowns, namely, John Bickerdike, Robert Bradley, John Davies, William Jones, William Kemp, William Robertson, and Thomas Bevan Winter. The ministers were seated in a row at the upper end of the room: and the pulpit was removed to the third window, the sashes of which were taken out, for the convenience of seeing and hearing from the court-yard, where seats were erected, and where there was a much larger congregation than within the room, which was principally filled with ladies.

Exactly at eleven o'clock the service began by singing the four first verses of the 245th Hymn in the Countess of Huntingdon's Collection, page 373, to the old 100th Psalm tune:—

“Jesus where'er thy people meet,
There they behold thy mercy-seat;
Where'er they seek Thee Thou art found,
And ev'ry place is hallow'd ground.

“For Thou within no walls confin'd,
Inhabitest the humble mind;
Such ever bring Thee when they come,
And going take Thee to their home.

“Dear Shepherd of thy chosen few,
Thy former mercies here renew!
Here, to our waiting hearts proclaim
The sweetness of thy saving name.

“Here may we prove the power of prayer,
To strengthen faith, and sweeten care;
To teach our faint desires to rise,
And bring all heaven before our eyes.”

The Rev. William Francis Platt, minister of Holywell-mount chapel, then stepped into the pulpit, and in a sweet, lively, fervent and energetic prayer solemnly dedicated the house, the institution, and all concerned therein, to the guidance, protection, and blessing of God, whose cause, whose honour and glory, was the perpetual aim and design of the noble foundress of the College; and is the grand object of the present trustees, chosen by her Ladyship, desire ever to have in view.

After the prayer of dedication, two of the students, Kemp and Winter, went to the middle window, where a table was placed for the purpose, and read verse by verse, alternately, “O come, let us sing unto the Lord,” &c., and the psalms selected for the occasion, viz., Psalm xix., lxviii., cxxxii., and cxxxiii. Another student, William Jones, then read the first lesson, Isaiah lv. Kemp and Winter read, “We praise thee, O God,

we acknowledge," &c. Jones read the second lesson (Eph. iv.), to the end of verse 16. Kemp and Winter read, "O be joyful in the Lord all ye lands," &c. This being ended, the first and third verses of the 112th Hymn were sung:—

"Peace be to this congregation,
Peace to ev'ry soul therein,
Peace, the foretaste of salvation,
Peace the fruit of cancell'd sin!
Peace that speaks its heav'nly Giver,
Peace to sensual minds unknown,
Peace divine, that lasts for ever,
Here erect its glorious throne.

"Prince of Peace, if thou art near us,
Fix in all our hearts thy home;
By thy swift appearing cheer us,
Quickly let thy kingdom come:
Answer all our expectation,
Give our raptur'd souls to prove
Glorious, uttermost salvation,
Heav'nly everlasting love."

Mr. Crole delivered a charge to the students in English, to the president in Latin, and again to the trustees in English, exhorting each and all to the performance of their duties. We make an extract from the first of these divisions:—

"Above all, the *grace* of God alive in your soul, an ardent desire to promote the honour of Jesus Christ, and a fervent love for the souls of others, are infinitely preferable; for a man possessed of all the former, yet destitute of these, is only as *sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal*. To all these you must add incessant and fervent prayer, a strict watch over your own spirits, a due use of all the advantages of much reading, writing, and college exercises. It is well observed by Lord Bacon, 'that much reading makes a full man, much writing makes a correct man, and much speaking makes a ready man;' you will improve the hint. A sacred regard to the discipline of the house, the authority of the President, and those studies appointed for your improvement, can never be dispensed with. For no man who has a character at stake, who means, or is capable of doing his duty, would undertake the superintendence of this place, without an entire authority both over your time and studies; hence early rising, close application, and no absenting from the regular business of the College at any time without leave, will most undoubtedly be expected from you. Continuing to maintain the truth of the Gospel, and the honour of your own characters and connexion, our houses, our hearts, our pulpits, and our pockets will fly open for your use and encouragement: we intend to use you as Moses did his rod; whilst it continued a rod he held it in his hand, but when it became a serpent he fled from it. While you continue the instruments of Divine truth and power, we will hold you in our hands; but

when you shall degenerate into immorality and error, and so become the representation of him who was a liar from the beginning, we will avoid you, we will endeavour to forget you, and pray to God to supply your place with better men. I do not speak this as if I suspected any one of you; I speak in faithfulness to my office. My expectations concerning you are flattering, and my prayers for you shall not be restrained. May the God of truth and grace bless you all; may you prosper in all spiritual and literary improvements; and may you, my dear young brethren, come forth adorned with every gift and grace which shall render you able and successful ministers of the New Testament."

At the conclusion of the charge, Mr. Crole read the titles, and epitomized the contents of the fifteen Doctrinal Articles, drawn up for the Connexion at large, and this institution in particular; to which Articles every trustee, president, and student must give his hearty assent and consent, and departing therefrom is removeable, and to be removed.

Mr. Crole required first of the students their hearty assent and consent to the sound doctrines contained in those Articles (doctrines perfectly consonant with the Doctrinal Articles of the Church of England) to be expressed by holding up the hand.

They all stood and held up the right hand.

He next required of the president his hearty assent and consent to the said Articles.

He stood and held up his right hand.

Lastly, he demanded of the trustees their hearty assent and consent to the said Articles.

They stood and held up the right hand.

This was a solemn part of the service. The countenances of many seemed to express their earnest prayers that God would preserve every one steadfast in the faith.

After Mr. Crole had finished his charge, the first and third verses of the forty-fifth hymn were sung:—

" Captain of thine enlisted host,
Display thy glorious banner high;
The summons send from coast to coast,
And call a numerous army nigh.

" Bid, bid thy heralds publish loud
The peaceful blessing of thy reign:
And when they speak of sprinkling blood,
The myst'ry to the heart explain."

The sermon was then delivered from Rom. x. 13-15:—

" For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and who shall they preach except they be sent?"

It commenced historically :—

"Brethren, we are met together on a very solemn and important occasion. Two events have rendered this day memorable,—the birth of the Countess of Huntingdon, who was born on the twenty-fourth of August, one thousand seven hundred and seven,—and the opening of her College in South Wales on the twenty-fourth of August, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight, when a sermon was preached by her chaplain, the Rev. Geo. Whitefield, on Exod. xx. 26, 'In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.' It is a pity that the discourse was not published. From the success which he had himself experienced in God's service, for a series of years, no doubt his soul anticipated with delight the innumerable blessings which a guilty world would derive from an institution evidently founded with no other view than to promote the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom. The prayers of thousands were offered up to God for a blessing on her Ladyship's designs; and she lived to see them answered even beyond her sanguine expectations.

"From the school of the prophets many useful ministers have been sent out, who have been honoured instruments not only of the conversion of multitudes in their own country, but likewise of spreading the knowledge of Christ into various dark and distant parts of the world. And though it has pleased God to remove the dear and illustrious foundress, yet he has inclined the hearts of many to perpetuate her institution. The lease of the College at Trevecca having expired, and the situation being too remote for the inspection of the persons on whom the trust devolved, they thought it would be more convenient if they removed it nearer the metropolis. The providence of God led them to this beautiful spot, which by the generous exertions of his people they have purchased and paid for: and we are assembled this day to dedicate it to the Lord by humble prayer, hoping that he will condescend to accept it as a tribute of gratitude, and to make it a blessing to his Church in all succeeding generations.

"The part assigned me in this solemn service, is to call your attention to the necessity and privilege of a Gospel ministry; that you may be thankful to God for such an inestimable blessing, and zealous to extend its beneficial influence to those who are yet strangers to the joyful sound.

"It was my design to have preached from the same text as Mr. Whitefield; but as the trustees suggested the text which they thought was best adapted to the subject on which they designed me to preach, I have altered my intention."

We must add another extract :—

"Some years ago, I spent an evening with a Baptist minister, in a

village in Nottinghamshire, after I had been preaching to the country people in a farm house. He took notice of the manner in which I invited all who heard me to come to Christ, and the arguments which I used to persuade them to flee to him as the only refuge. He thought that such preaching was attended with the greatest success, but his conscience would not allow him to adopt it, lest the people should suppose that they had a power in themselves to obey. 'And yet (said he), I perceive that the ministers, who give a call or invitation to sinners, are blessed to the conversion of multitudes; while we, who are afraid to use it, are seldom the instruments of awakening a single soul.' I replied, 'If you acknowledge that God works most by these means, is not his providence the best interpreter of his will?'

"It was a wise answer of a great man to a person who accused him of inconsistency, for believing that only a certain number were appointed unto salvation, and yet inviting sinners indiscriminately to come and partake of its blessings—'If you will point out who the elect of God are (says he), I will preach to them only; but whilst I am ignorant who they are, I must invite all, that I may be sure I have not withheld the invitation from any whom God intends to save.'"

And yet another:—

"Our dear deceased patroness was truly eminent for offering up to God her most fervent prayers, and for devoting to his service all her property. Her time, her talents, her soul and body were consecrated to the Lord. She knew that it was laudable to feed the hungry, and clothe the naked; but all inferior considerations seemed to be lost in her superior concern for the everlasting happiness of perishing mortals. I hope that I shall never lose the strong impression which was made on my mind in a conversation that I had with her, about the wants of a family who appeared to be in distress. 'I can do for them (said she) but very little. I am obliged to be a spectator of miseries, which I pity but cannot relieve; for when I gave myself up to the Lord, I likewise devoted to him all my fortune; with this reserve, that I would take with a sparing hand what might be necessary for my food and raiment, and for the support of my children, should they live to be reduced. I was led to this (continued she) from a consideration that there were many benevolent persons, who had no religion, who would feel for the temporal miseries of others, and help them; but few, even among professors, who had a proper concern for the awful condition of ignorant and perishing souls. What, therefore, I can save for a while out of my own necessities, I will give them; but more I dare not take without being guilty of sacrilege.'

"The value of such a life can never be ascertained till the heavens and the earth be no more. And then when temporal happiness and miseries shall have vanished, like the illusion of a dream, thousands and tens of thousands will be thankful that she lived so long the faithful servant of her God, and the happy instrument of their conversion. With an income of only twelve hundred a year, spent in the service of

God, what wonders was she enabled to perform! She maintained the College at her sole expense; she erected chapels in most parts of the kingdom, and she supported ministers, who were sent to preach in various parts of the world. This was living indeed to the glory of God! Go thou, therefore, who art saying, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits,' and do likewise. Thou canst not evidence thy love to God or man, by adding house to house, and field to field, or by treasuring up thy riches behind the Exchange. On the contrary, if God hath given thee wealth with a liberal hand, and thou hast no heart to expend it in his service, it will convince every being but thyself, that thou hast no love to him; and consequently that, 'What shall I render unto the Lord?' so often in thy lips, is the language of hypocrisy, and not of gratitude.

"I remember calling on her Ladyship once, with a person who came from the country. When we came out, he turned his eye towards the house, and, after a short pause, exclaimed, 'What a lesson! Can a person of her noble birth, nursed in the lap of grandeur, live in such a house so meanly furnished? and shall I, a tradesman, be surrounded with luxury and elegance? From this moment I shall hate my house, my furniture, and myself, for spending so little for God, and so much in folly.'"

The sermon being ended, the last verse of the seventy-sixth Hymn was sung:—

"Fly abroad, thou mighty Gospel,
Win and conquer, never cease;
May thy lasting wide dominions
Multiply, and still increase:
May thy sceptre, may thy sceptre, may thy sceptre
Sway th' enlightened world around."

The Rev. Lemuel Kirkman, of Spafields chapel, then went into the pulpit, and prayed with much fervency and affection for the success of the Gospel in general, and for the College in particular.

The solemn service was then concluded with singing—

"Blessings for ever on the Lamb,
Who bore the curse for wretched man;
Let angels round his sacred name,
And every creature say, Amen."

The four ministers who engaged had all been students at the College in Wales.

The whole service took up nearly three hours and a half; and there were present seven or eight hundred persons, many of them very respectable, who expressed the highest satisfaction.

It was a day much to be remembered. A Divine unction was evidently both upon the ministers and congregation. May it be

a token for good, an earnest of the future and perpetual blessing of God on the institution to the end of time !

Cheshunt College is vested in the hands of seven trustees. The gentlemen first engaging in the arduous and responsible duties devolving on those who sustain this office, were James Oldham Oldham, Esq., Messrs. William Hodson, Matthias Dupont, Thomas Weatherill, William Langston, Henry Batley, William Astle, and John Lloyd, Esq. With the trustees for the time being, rests the sole right of admitting and rejecting students, and the appointment or dismissal of tutors : but previously to the full admission of any individual as a student, the trustees are directed to call to their assistance in examining the candidate, the president of the College, together with "one or more of the principal ministers serving in the Connexion of the Countess of Huntingdon, or any other ministers whom the trustees shall think proper." An investigation is then to take place into the evidence of a work of Divine grace in the heart of the candidate, and his call to the work of the ministry, and also his qualifications for its exercise. If the result is satisfactory to the majority of the trustees, the young man is admitted, on his solemnly declaring his unfeigned assent to the doctrines contained in the fifteen Articles of faith which have been already stated as subscribed at the first ordination of ministers at Spafford chapel. The students are boarded and educated for four years, entirely at the charge of the funds of the College ; and such are the liberal principles of this institution, that every student is at full liberty, at the expiration of the period of study, to "serve in the ministry of the Gospel either in the late Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, or abroad, or in the Established Church, or in any other of the Churches of Christ." This most liberal regulation ought to be more known than it is ; then, surely, the friends of religion, generally, would not be backward to render their aid towards the support of an institution from whose walls has already issued forth no inconsiderable number of zealous and faithful ministers, some labouring as missionaries in foreign lands, others occupying useful stations in the Established Church, and others as pastors of congregational churches ; besides those who have preferred to labour in the Connexion. Here, then, let us earnestly urge those friends of pure and undefiled religion, whose warm hearts prefer the general extension of the kingdom of Christ, before the exclusive enlargement of any one particular department of that kingdom, to examine the claims which Cheshunt College has to their liberal aid. Will it be out of place here to drop a hint also to those *ministers*,

whether in or out of the pale of the Established Church, who have to look back on months and years spent in Cheshunt College? You have not forgotten the assiduous labours and watchful solicitude of those men of God who superintended your studies, nor the liberality with which all your wants were supplied, while there, by the attention of the trustees. Does not *gratitude* to God first, and then to the conductors and supporters of that institution, glow in your bosom? While memory retains its power, you will not forget the *debt* you owe to Cheshunt College.

The following reply to a friend, who desired to be informed how Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, college, and chapels were conducted after her decease, is from the pen of Dr. Haweis, the last surviving trustee appointed under the will of the excellent Countess:—

“ Dear Sir,—I sit down to answer your request with pleasure. We have no secret; we wish the whole world to know the manner of our procedure. We have but one object, the kingdom of God and his righteousness. We think it hath been eminently promoted by the steps we have pursued. If you, or any of your kind friends, can point out a more excellent way, we shall be happy to pursue it. Conscious of human infirmity, we can only presume that we are pursuing what we as yet have found best, and which God hath been pleased so far to seal with his approbation, that the success has been great and the offences surprisingly few. Those who are immediately with us, or though gone out, are still in union with us, preach, I think, the Gospel every Sabbath-day to at least 100,000 people; and we have the satisfaction of hearing continually, that the Lord is adding to his church daily such as shall be saved.

“ You ask of what church we profess ourselves? We desire to be esteemed as the members of Christ's Catholic and Apostolic Church, and essentially one with the Church of England, of which we regard ourselves as living members. And though, as the Church of England is now governed, we are driven to a mode of ordaining ministers and maintaining societies not amenable to what we think abused episcopal jurisdiction, yet our own mode of government and regulating our congregations will, probably, be allowed essentially episcopal. With us, a few preside. The doctrines we subscribe (for we require subscription, and, what is better, they are always truly preached by us), are those of the Church of England, in the literal and grammatical sense. Nor is the liturgy of the Church of England performed more devoutly in any church, nor the Scriptures better read, for the edifying the people, as those who attend our London congregations can witness.

“ Our method of bringing our brethren into the ministry is by a considerable trial of their tempers, conduct, and gifts. For this end, we have a College established at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, to give a more scientific education to such young men as wish to devote themselves

to the ministry, but have no opportunity of such an education. These must come well recommended to the College trustees, with testimonials of their real Christian conversation for a considerable time past. They are then strictly examined as to their Christian knowledge and conduct, their capability for learning, &c., and, if found promising subjects, they are admitted for three months on trial; after which, if the president reports well of them, and their examination gives good evidence of diligence and improvement, they are confirmed students.

“ These, whilst diligently employed in getting the common acquisition of languages, and a glance of the sciences, are in turn exercised in praying, reading and speaking in College; and sometimes on the Lord’s-day sent out to small places in the neighbourhood, where they can be useful to the poor of the flock in instructing them. An open annual examination gives every subscriber an opportunity to prove their progress. When they have remained three years or more, if approved, they are sent forth to preach and teach, till, after sufficient trial, they become finally approved and ordained.

“ The last year, I may venture to speak from being a witness of the fact, the first student knew well the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; and was ten times a better biblical scholar than usually goes from our Universities, besides his theological acquirements, which, to compare with the run of students in our Universities, would be like comparing Dr. Parr to a school-boy.

“ From this seminary we are supplied, as far it goes; but our calls are more than such an establishment can provide for; we have therefore, another method, which we have proved equally efficacious. Whenever a young man of good parts and abilities is called to the knowledge of God’s grace, but, being a handicraft, or employed through the day, can have but little time for study, yet is very desirous to be useful and zealous for the good of his fellow-creatures, we have a school of prophets, under the superintendence of one of the most aged and intelligent of our managers, who directs the mode of procedure.* This is open every Monday evening; and as many young men as are approved, are allowed to speak on some passage of Scripture, and pray, two or three in succession, for the proof and exercise of their gifts, as well as the edification of their hearers. Remarks and observations are made to them privately by some aged and judicious hearer; and if they seem not clear in stating the evangelical doctrine, it is pointed out to them, and nothing permitted contrary to the doctrinal articles of the Church of England.

“ When they have been some time thus exercised, and a report of their good proficiency made, they are sent to some poor-house or work-house on the Lord’s-day, and sometimes in the evening, where they may be of service to such as otherwise would have little attention paid to them respecting religious knowledge, and sometimes to little places in the neighbourhood of London. These labours are all free; and the love of the work, and not the wages, their only reward. We have multitudes of witnesses of the blessing attending their labours; and

* This has long been discontinued.—Ep.

where they thus advance, and their spirit more devoted to the work of the ministry, we send them into the country to our various societies ; and when their abilities unfold, and they become able preachers, they are brought into our larger congregations, unless, what very frequently happens, some congregation solicits their abidance, and then they often sit down settled pastors : but if they are ordained in the Connexion, with the engagement of removing at our desire always a part of the year, they still form a branch of our rotation.

“ In either case, whether they come from College or out of the prophet's school, they are for a time, sometimes several years, evangelists only, and go, according to our calls, to the several parts of the kingdom, where our labours have been blessed in gathering an elect people. When approved, and themselves expressing their desire to be ordained, their case is considered, and if we think they should be admitted or wait, it is signified to them.

“ If, upon mature consideration, it is thought fit they should be ordained, we select a minister whose wisdom, age, piety, and consideration in the Connexion, give him weight, and associate three or four of the nearest ordained ministers with him, desiring them to examine and ordain, if approved, such persons as they will find at such a church, and generally two or three at a time. Notice is given to the candidates, who have for several years preceding approved themselves faithful : and they have a solemn designation by imposition of hands. These continue to labour, as before, now ministering the ordinances. The married have often a home ; but as the congregations where they labour are not considered as their charge solely, they are moveable whenever called upon by us. We think a change and rotation most profitable for both people and ministers : and have proved, by long experience, that by this means we are most prosperous, the ministers themselves more alive, and the people more edified.

It is one of our mercies that our ministers are nearly independent of the congregations where they minister, neither under their control, nor so dependent upon them for a maintenance as to be under any influence ; for in love, always consulting their good, they are under no temptation of being unfaithful, through fear of loss, as they are sure of being equally well provided for on any removal. But if we receive from any congregation reasons for rendering a change desirable, they are generally complied with as soon as we can provide a suitable successor.

“ As our provision for the ministers and the expense for the places is defrayed by the several congregations, a committee is formed of the men of most weight and seriousness in every congregation, who raise a fund for the supply of the necessary expenditure, and inform us what they can afford to ministers ; which is sometimes more, sometimes less. None raise more than to allow at the rate of a hundred guineas and travelling expenses, and these but a few ; whilst others are often reduced to less than thirty ; and in our poorest places our travelling fund often comes in aid, or where a particular urgency calls for help.

“ By this means no minister is discouraged or deterred from speaking freely to every man in the congregation. He has a certain stipend,

and has nothing to fear by offending through his fidelity. If any difference arise between the minister and his people, during his stay, we are sure to hear of it, and use the best prudence to heal any misunderstanding, or change him for a more acceptable supply.

“Through mercy, we have, considering so voluntary an association, maintained astonishing peace and union : and every day have calls which we are unable immediately to supply, though we use every effort in our power that the Gospel, throughout the kingdom, shall be preached to the poor of the flock.

“Respecting our ministers and students, it is an established rule, under which they are admitted into our Connexion, that no error contrary to the doctrinal Articles of the Church, or immorality in conduct, is for a moment to be connived at : but that, if ever such be proved upon them, they will no longer be admitted to minister among us.

“We receive not hastily an accusation, though we are always open to every information, and immediately examine the charge which is brought, and it is an invariable rule with us, whenever the charge is proved, to cut off the offender, and never admit him again as a preacher among us. We shall be happy in his recovery to God : but where public offence has been given, we resolve never to restore such a one to the ministry.

“Through mercy, we have only in six years known the necessity of this discipline on two persons. One, against whom we had strong charges laid, with evident great lightness of conduct : and another who introduced republican principles into his discourses, and after solemn rebuke, persisting, was removed. He has since proved very heretical in doctrine, and become the pastor of a Socinian congregation.

“These were desired quietly to withdraw from us. They suffered no other censure, nor probably loss ; for their situation did not procure what any good journeyman, in almost any trade in London, could earn.

“A constant rotation is established by us, sometimes for a longer sometimes for a shorter residence, as circumstances and the leadings of Providence suggest. None of our people preach seldomer than three or four times a week, and often six or seven times. They are enjoined to give themselves wholly to their work, and to visit any village or farm house in the neighbourhood of their settlement, on the week-days, and collect any that are desirous of hearing the Gospel word. Thus a number of little societies are formed around the place of their settlement, where they usually attend on the Lord's-day, if it is within distance, and a happy savour of the Gospel of Christ becomes more diffused.

“It is marvellous in these distressed times, that, our congregations lying among the poor of the flocks chiefly, we have been able to maintain the different places so well, and to go on without any difficulties. A few of us, indeed, through mercy, can afford to preach the Gospel without expense, and count it our privilege to do more : but a very considerable revenue must necessarily be drawn from every congregation for its own support, and the receipts and expenditure, in all the larger and most important places, come under our inspection and ap-

probation. No man, with us, can preach for gain. Our pay would ill reward his labours; if he has not souls for his wages, he will be sadly recompensed in this world.

"I have mentioned a travelling fund, and you may perhaps wish to know what that means. You must understand, that Lady Huntingdon's immense liberality always exhausted her income, and at her death, except some of the buildings, not a shilling remained, when the debts were paid, for any endowment; contrariwise, a large rent-charge remained. An estate, charged in America with 4,000*l.* for our use, as trustees and executors, has been violently seized by the Georgians, and we have never been able to procure justice or recovery. Under these difficulties we continued a method, pursued in her Ladyship's life-time, of obtaining once a-year a collection from our largest congregations, to be applied wholly to the work of paying the expenses of travelling, and little assistance to the labourers that were sent to poorer congregations. This sum, never exceeding two hundred pounds a-year, we have, with great economy, made hitherto to supply these extraordinary calls.

"We have also, by a liberal subscription, purchased the College-house and premises, which are truly noble, and admirably adapted for our purpose. It was purchased very reasonably indeed, and is now commodious and beautiful. We have raised, by an annual subscription fund, which we hope to increase, a stipend for an able president, and to support from ten to fifteen or twenty students. Hitherto, the College trustees have always been enabled to receive all proper subjects, which have offered, and they could now support a greater number, if they could find such as they should approve. Those who have come out as preachers have turned out admirably; and those who are now in are equally well reported of, and as promising.

"I need not tell you who are the trustees and coadjutors. The most perfect harmony hath hitherto prevailed. We have never yet had a single dispute. I do not know that we had a single diversity of sentiment; but in all our proceedings (and a very extraordinary thing it is), we have been entirely unanimous. Nor have I observed a spark of jealousy, or a wish to thwart in any one proposal which hath been offered. I attribute, with thankfulness, much of our peace and success to this spirit of union which the great Head of the Church hath given us. I am persuaded our eye is single to his glory. We are sure we can have no earthly advantage in our view, and, therefore, our body is full of light. I can only pray that we may continue increasing with the increase of God.

"Brother, this is a true state of our conduct and Connexion, as far as I know it; and I believe you will give me always credit that I speak the truth from my heart, as I do when I cordially assure you how faithfully I am yours,

"Dec. 21, 1795.

"T. H."

Since the College has been opened, it has met with support from the religious public; a chapel has been erected on the premises, and a part of the College has been rebuilt on a plan more commodious than was that of the old structure. Under

the successive superintendence of the different tutors whom death or other circumstances have removed, the Lord has from time to time vouchsafed the tokens of his favour to the institution.

Of the original trustees none remain among the living, the others rest from their labours; but He whose great cause the establishment of this College was designed to promote, has raised up a succession of individuals to fill their places. May a double portion of the Spirit of heavenly wisdom and grace rest on them, the tutors, and the students; and the Lord himself send increasing prosperity!

The following letter from Lady Huntingdon to one of her students, who had desired her Ladyship's opinion and advice with respect to the ministry, was published at the request of the ministers in her Connexion for the use of the students in general:—

“You wish for my advice relative to the ministry. From the connexion you stand in with me, you have a just right to claim, not only my wishes and prayers for you, but the long experience of a poor, unprofitable servant, now near fifty years facing hell and the world, in my most dear and divine Master Jesus Christ's service; and while I am ashamed of myself, I daily glory more in his shewing any mercy to such a poor worm of the dust as I know myself to be.

“Two points I must lay down as most indispensable qualifications for a minister of the everlasting Gospel. The first is, the invariable conviction that the church of Christ can have no establishment upon earth, but that which came down from Heaven on the day of Pentecost, and which is continued to it. From thence only all truth can be derived; all else must be of the world, as having no better origin; and what does not come down from Heaven, can have no property that can cause its return thither. This is the true Church of Christ only, under all denominations upon earth. Modes, manners, and political governments of all kinds, prove but the distress of the times, from our ignorance, carnality, and unbelief in the Son of God. Take so many dead men, and dress them in their coffins, in the habit of each profession of religion upon earth, they are still but dead bodies; you see all they are: such only is the Church, the people, or individuals, that are not of that Jerusalem from above. Look, then, to that call which is to that Church. This true Church has nothing but faith to live upon; as it belongs not to this world, it cannot even rationally be supposed to find anything here of its own nature to continue life to it; therefore, it cannot exist without faith, which is the gift of God.

“This then, must be the second point to be insisted on, to prove your ministry fruitful. Ordinances have all their blessings, as the fruits only of the true Church's original excellence; but all these must be administered by faith, and received by faith, or not possibly profitable.—‘All things are profitable to him that believeth.’ Why has God taken such pains to record, for near six thousand years, our brother and sister worms, but because they believed and trusted him?

and these favourites of his were never to be forgotten in time, nor through all eternity, for no better reason, and surely good enough, whilst they glorified most his tender mercies and faithfulness to the weak, miserable, and rebellious. Let us now see the properties of this faith. 'By it we stand.' No sound ground under our feet for an inch, but what this maintains for us. 'Overcomes the world.' 'This is the victory, even our faith.' 'Obtains promises : works righteousness.' And then all miraculous consequences follow by its power.—'By faith we endure.' Why? As seeing Him that is invisible. It has its hope founded upon evidence, and for this reason, the old and wiser had that report, due to the consistency of their practice.—By this one faith, and no other, Enoch walked with God, and had this testimony, that he pleased him; the property and effects to him, were translation and never-tasting death. To enforce this one faith, St. Paul says upon this subject, 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' How vain, then, are all our selfish hopes and fears whilst without that which can only please God, and is his own free gift to the helpers, vile, needy sons of men! Here, then, is the Church, and only Church that lasts for eternity, both from its foundation, from Heaven derived, and by that only mean can it be supported while on earth, consistent with its divine origin, viz., by that faith only which is the gift of God, and which will abide with us till the swellings of Jordan bear us where love, from the eternal vision of Jesus Christ, constitutes our heaven of glory; and this as immutable as God's attribute of love can make it.

"What shall I say more? but, as a faithful friend to your soul, your labours, your comforts in time, and your eternal blessedness hereafter, examine these your high privileges, if called to minister in this glorious Church, whose origin is from God, and whose further gift does also support it. Till further convinced of these truths, 'Lo here! or lo there!' will be your fruitless search. Let prayer for this faith prove to you the reasonableness and truth of that first calling, when your poor ignorant and simple heart, sensible of no power, or even rational conclusion, to hope for present or future happiness, was warned from Heaven to feel these important wants—freedom from conscious and awful fears—relief from guilt—a friend in God, for eternity.—What a never-to-be-forgotten proof, and strong evidence, had you here of the infinite value (could you have seen it) of that very Church of which this ray of light (shining through the dark, comprehended it not) was the sure and certain prelude of the divine establishment of its truth in your heart, from a rising evidence that must carry you forward both to grace and glory. To these, you must rise through the multiplied evils of your own nature; but sure you and I ought to yield humbly and thankfully to all we can suffer, for a purpose so great, so supremely excellent in all its final and certain conclusion.—Was that glorious Saviour of sinners, as God manifest in the flesh—was he obliged to come from Heaven, through all unrighteousness, or he never could have taken our nature, and destroyed our sin in it? And ought we to complain, whilst we find he is, by those struggles, only breaking forth through all our unrighteousness, in order to clothe us with himself, as our best robe?—Silence, silence for ever, then, these hellish com-

plaints ; and let us by faith embrace (in all our griefs and sorrows, and through all) this our strong-hold—the victory is to be obtained by faith.

“ The more scriptural and simple your address (in the ministry) to the heart the better ; applying to facts—there the positive evils, there Scripture with the knowledge of those evils in your own heart, is that truth our Lord must bless ; he can bear witness to nothing else, as he emphatically and essentially is Truth itself. O that he may give you that powerful faith that overcomes the sinner's heart ! and though hell should rise in judgment against you, One, above all, shall say, ‘ Well done, good and faithful servant.’ Want of this faith makes cowards of poor mortals, and makes many fearing hearts obey the devil from temporal views, whilst pangs of conviction haunt their waking hours. The Lord's most wise and most gracious Providence is towards that honest and warm heart that faithfully relies on him. O ! may my maternal advice meet in your spirit the only guide into all truth, the Holy Ghost. A day is coming ! if you abide a wise and faithful servant, when the brighter day-dawn shall appear, and He, who calls himself the ‘ Bright and Morning Star,’ shall arise, never to set more.—Prove all things in a simple and child-like spirit, and never forget this repeated counsel—‘ Reason not by multiplied ideas,’ it is the bane of all good sense and true simplicity ; and our only great Prophet points at its insufficiency, when he says, ‘ By taking thought, you cannot make one hair white or black :’ and if not able, by this thought to do the least, how unreasonable to have hope in greater matters ! Vanity, that worst of all evils, (which ignorance only supposes wisdom in man to direct his ways,) falls in love with itself, and for ever excludes all divine teachings from Heaven, which never were, nor ever will be known but by the poor in spirit, to whom the kingdom of God expressly belongs.

“ Hope, then, for nothing but sorrow, for the vanity of your own mind, and the opinions of men. The wisdom from above has all those glorious properties which attend upon Grace by Jesus Christ—and this is a living fact to your soul, that God will own on earth, as he will eternally in heaven. The prayer of faith before the Lord, in simplicity and sincerity, and perhaps with many tears also, is that, and that only, which opens the door in heaven, by the tender-feeling heart of Jesus Christ, for your real and honest distress on all occasions. You may get, by the froth of your vain imagination, or the help of the same sort from others, something supposed good ; but all will be as the morning cloud and early dew, it must pass away. The parrot's rote will neither do for the Church below, nor above. It is the furnace brings the true standard of all the gold that ever was, or ever will be used in the Lord's temple. May you, then, be ever so prepared for your faithful services in it, that (with the All hail ! of your blessed Master, in the ministrations he shall appoint you to) you may render him the praise for an honour and privilege so eminently great.

“ I write thus, hoping and believing you have counted the cost, and that you truly mean to devote yourself unreservedly to the Lord Jesus Christ, as one of those happy subjects of that everlasting Covenant his

inestimable sacrifice has secured. If this is not the case, take an honest and religious place in the world, and in private life, live and die an honest man. The sorrowful scenes from false apostles, wicked and bad ministers with high professions, make me often forced to say,—‘Good for that man had he never been born.’ My good will I ever wish to show you ; but my secret approbation before my glorious Lord and Master, can only be, when the ministrations in that true sanctuary which God has provided, are honestly and disinterestedly served, to his glory alone ; this will ever be to the joy and rejoicing of my heart.

“Don’t ever forget the two points which have the material meaning in this letter, viz., what the only true Church is, as first coming down from heaven, and how, ever by faith alone, continued upon earth. These essentials must be, ever, the glory of all your labours, while so founded and supported, by the life of a divine faith, upon the Son of God. Acknowledge from me, my thanks and best wishes to your kind and Reverend friend ; and should any thing by Providence bring him near my abode, I hope he will accept the hospitality of the heart and house of an old pilgrim, harkening for the voice to bid her rest (as a poor unprofitable servant) from all her labours.

“With true, faithful, and maternal affection, I pray for all divine and heavenly blessings to rest upon your own soul, and all your labours. I am your sincere friend,

S. HUNTINGDON.

“College, South Wales, March 1, 1785.”

Having, at page 113, given a list of the students of the College of Trevecca, at Talgarth, Wales, we here add the names of those who have been introduced to the ministry by means of Lady Huntingdon’s Foundation at Cheshunt :—

W. Jones	J. Brown	Cheltenham
W. Kemp	A. Hay.....	Warrington
W. Robertson ...	J. Stone	Cheshunt
T. B. Winter.....	J. Shepherd	Burwell
J. Bickerdike.....	J. Trego	Brighton
R. Bradley.....	W. Arbon	Hull
J. Davis.....	J. Latchford	London
J. Parry.....	T. Longstaff.....	
J. James.....	J. Emblem	Stratford
J. Chamberlain...	R. Stodhart	Mulberry Gardens
W. Macdonald....	G. S. White	America
W. Mather.....	S. Hawthorn	Hereford
John Meffen.....	S. Franklin	Lewes
J. Birch	J. Bridgman	Chester
G. Lee.....	W. Wilkins	St. Agnes, Cornwall
W. Upjohn, A.M.	A. White	Southend
R. Turnbull	Joshua Meffen ...	London
R. Owen	E. Lake	Worcester
J. Finley	J. K. Foster	Cheshunt College
W. Thomas	J. Howes	Goring
T. S. Walsh.....	H. Fisher	
W. Bennet	T. Griffith.....	Cam. Glouces.
W. Ross	R. Wardle.....	Thatcham
J. Mather.....	T. Keyworth	Nottingham
G. Gladstone.....	J. Williams	Chester
R. Newman, A.M.	A. Westoby, M.A.	Curate of Emberden

F. Mardin		J. Griffiths	Welsh Methodists
J. Blomfield	London	W. G. G. Fells...	Middleton
E. Craig, A.M...		W. A. Hurndall...	Devonport
B. Isaac	Hackney	J. Allen	Newhaven
D. Jones	Cheshunt	C. Thomas	North Nibley
T. T. Coales	East Grinstead	James Cope	Alfiston
M. Freeman		F. G. White	Gloucester
G. Marris	Aston, Berkshire	F. R. More	Soham
G. D. Owen	Maidenhead	J. J. J. Kempster.	Congleton
J. Poole	Worcester	J. Sortain, A.B...	Brighton
H. T. Turner		G. Weight, A.B..	Southwark
J. W. James	St. Ives, Cornwall	E. Bates	Leamington
S. Davis	Establishment	M. Butler	Southgate
T. Noyes ..	Bath	W. S. Keale	Torpoint, Cornwall
T. Sharp, A.M...	Crown-st. Chapel	R. Squibb	Ely
T. Jones, A.B...	St. James's	J. Stribling	Enfield
J. Wells	Cheltenham	R. Pingree	Maidstone
G. Steward	Wood Bastwick	E. Parry	London
J. Jones	Birmingham	W. Woodhouse...	
J. Owen ...	Bath	W. Wilsdon	Preston
H. Chambers	Bellary, East Indies	J. Davies	Aldermanbury
J. Sherman	Surrey Chapel	H. Rogers	Wolverhampton
T. Stevenson	Gate-st., London	T. Hughes	Marlborough Chapel
G. Mottram	East Grinstead	S. T. Gibbs	Canterbury
T. Anderson	Dover	R. Roberts	
J. Bosisto		H. Hollis	Framlingham
R. Owen	Holywell Mount	F. Perkins	Reading
J. Durrant	Adelphi, London	C. Bird	Warrington
G. Neeton	Taber. Norwich	S. Franklin	Hereford
J. Wood	Great Malvern	W. Powell	Folkestone
W. Aldridge	East Grinstead	T. Dodd	Swansea
W. Lucy	Bristol	B. Franklin	Jamaica
J. Beaufoy		D. Evans	Cheshunt
E. Morley	Hull	J. P. Simpson ...	Brighton
B. Woodyard ...	St. Agnes, Cornwall	J. Morris	Cambridge
J. Tackle	Bradford, Wilts	J. Abbs ...	Travancore
J. Woods		T. H. Woodroffe.	Oxford
L. J. Wake	Cheltenham	B. S. Hollis	Edmonton
J. Harris	Kidderminster	L. Hurndall	Berkley
J. Dryden	Norwich	W. J. Grundy ...	Preston
W. Hodson	Whitechapel	S. Lepine	Basingstoke [tions
W. Fletcher	Bath	C. Lee	Reading Village Sta-
B. Parsons	Ebley	E. C. Wilshire...	
J. Saunders, A.B.	Silk Willoughby	E. C. Lewis	Rochdale
C. Clarke, A.B..	Lincolnshire	W. M. Cox	
J. Langridge	Tildsley Banks		

We would have followed this list with that of the students now resident at the College; but that list would be so merely local and temporary, and so uncertain in its effects on the future history of the Connexion, as well as so removed from the past, that, in consideration, we prefer to omit it; and, indeed, the addition of the names of places to the names in the list above given, is a doubtful good. Its object is to assist by such localisation the researches of the curious, now and hereafter.

On the decease of the Countess of Huntingdon, Lady Anne Erskine, who had long been her familiar friend, her much-

loved associate, and diligent and able assistant, was immediately called to fill that sphere to which she had been designated by her illustrious friend. The Erskine family had long been celebrated for extraordinary talents and abilities. Of Lady Anne Erskine it was manifest, that, as a woman, her natural powers were of a very high order. To acuteness of discernment, and a tenacious memory, were added, comprehension, firmness, and energy. These commanding excellencies were softened down by the more captivating graces of tenderness, commiseration, and urbanity. She was distinguished for that frankness, that openness to conviction, and that disinterestedness in her conduct, which insure confidence and admiration. She was naturally a genuine, open-hearted friend—known and beloved as such.

Placed at the head of the Connexion for so many years, and acknowledged as the ostensible representative of the deceased foundress, some account of her Ladyship will naturally be expected in this *Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon*. The following brief notice of Lady Anne Erskine, was written by a minister in the Connexion, now no more, and appeared in the “*Evangelical Magazine*,” about the year 1805. With some alterations and additions, it is here presented to the reader:—

“This noble lady was the daughter of the Earl of Buchan, by a lady of the house of Stuart, and the eldest of a numerous family.* Her early days were spent in Scotland. She mentioned to a lady, her acquaintance, the gracious dealings of the Lord when she was only about seven or eight years old. As she grew up, her early impressions wore off; and, for some years, she lived like too many of her rank and sex, in fashionable follies and in the company of those who were strangers to themselves, little affected about the eternal world into which they were going, and whose frivolity and love of pleasure left no place for matters of more solemn consideration. About this time, the Earl of Buchan, for his family convenience, removed to Bath; and there commenced her acquaintance with the excellent Lady Huntingdon, whose life was spent in endeavouring to do good, and whose efforts were then especially directed to those of her own rank and station. An acquaintance, formed about this time with the elder branches of the Hawkestone family, eminent for their excellence,

* Branches of which were lately the ornaments of the Bar in England and Scotland; and more distinguished by their talents and integrity, than even by the nobility of their descent. The great grandfather of Lady Anne was a man of distinguished piety, and a sufferer in the cause of religion in the days of Charles II. The names of Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine have received a stamp of especial reverence in the religious world, and they were branches of this family.

contributed to fix the sense of Divine truths on her mind, and she became a professor of the principles of Evangelical religion. A growing intimacy with Lady Huntingdon contributed much to confirm her mind, and some congeniality of spirit, probably, engaged the Countess to invite Lady Anne to remain with her as her friend and companion; and as this was equally pleasing to both, for many years of the latter part of Lady Huntingdon's life she was her constant friend and intimate. During these years, as a helper in the truth, she walked with her aged friend in great affection, making herself useful in assisting to discharge the burthen of cares and engagements in which Lady Huntingdon was involved; and how well she approved herself, may be concluded from the disposition which that good lady made of her affairs to such as she thought would most faithfully pursue the line she had so successfully traced. At Lady Huntingdon's decease, Lady Anne Erskine, with several gentlemen, was appointed trustee and executor of her will.

"During the life of the Foundress, Lady Anne was only known as zealously disposed to promote the cause of truth, without appearing in any prominent character; not being by Providence favoured with the liberal provision which her predecessor enjoyed, and which died with her. Indeed, Lady Huntingdon's zeal always outran her income; and though no person ever spent so little on herself, she left such incumbrances as her property was unequal to discharge, without disposing of some of her chapels. These incumbrances her executors and other friends immediately undertook to remove, and to preserve the chapels for the purpose to which they had been devoted. It was on this occasion that Lady Anne Erskine was called forth to a more distinguished station than she had yet filled. When Lady Huntingdon's disposition of her property was known, the trustees agreed, that, as Lady Anne was better acquainted with the Countess's mode of procedure than any other person, and had readily offered to devote herself to the service, she should be desired to occupy part of Lady Huntingdon's house, in Spafields, and constantly reside there, to carry on the needful correspondence, which was, indeed, immense; always advising with the other trustees, and rendering an account to them, when required, of her procedure. To her, with Dr. Ford and Mr. Best, therefore it was agreed that the administration should be entrusted.

"Lady Anne now became the prominent person, and though all Lady Huntingdon's income died with her, and Lady Anne possessed a mere pittance, there appeared no lack of support to the cause. She saw much of the operation of Divine Providence on her behalf, bringing her the most unexpected and salutary supplies in times of the greatest need. One particular instance deserves distinct record. A Mrs. H. called on Lady E., and begged permission, on quitting the room, to leave a letter on her table. On opening it, how great was Lady E.'s surprise to find five notes of 100*l.* each enclosed. Conceiving it to be a mistake, she sent for Mrs. H. and stated her fears; she smiled, and assured her it was at her own disposal, and perfectly right. 'Will you inform me,' said Lady E., 'what led you to do this?' Mrs. H. re-

plied, 'Some time since I became a widow, my husband left me a good property, and since his decease, my uncle died and left me as much more. This Scripture came to my mind, 'Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the *first fruits* of all thine increase.' I wished to obey it: I thought of the Missionary Society, and the College at Cheshunt; but these being supported by subscription, I expected would increase in their funds, and therefore not need it so much as yourself. Knowing that you had not the property Lady Huntingdon enjoyed, and sometimes feel embarrassments, I gave it you to strengthen your hands in the cause of God.' 'I had not (said Lady E. to a friend) a shilling in the house at that time. Application had been made to me to receive a chapel into the Connexion, which I was obliged to refuse; but as soon as I received this money, I sent for the parties, and took it under our patronage.

"Lady Anne was eminently qualified for her place, not only by an intimate knowledge of the manner in which her predecessor acted, but by a measure of ability, hereditary in the family of Erskine, as well as a devotedness of heart, that made it her pleasure to undergo any labour and difficulties for the sake of the work in which she was engaged. Those who were always consulted in emergencies, and knew the complicated nature of the service, were witnesses how greatly she strove to please all for their good to edification. But none except herself knew the many heart-aches, and the need of patience she had in dealing with such a number of persons as were managers of places, or employed in the ministry, when, as in a complicated machine, some wheel or tooth being out of order, rendered the uniform motion difficult to be preserved. To please every body was hardly possible in her situation; that some might be dissatisfied, to whose wishes she could not accord, and that others slighted her, who were incompetent judges of her excellencies, is not to be wondered at.* That she was enabled to go on with almost perfect satisfaction to her colleagues, and without the slightest breach between her and them for twelve years, all cordially concurring in one great object, and pursuing it ardently, forms no mean proof of a Christian spirit; as will be allowed by all who are acquainted with the difficulties to be encountered.

"During these twelve years, when her most active life commenced, she was indefatigably employed in the work of God. The red lines marked in her Bible indicate the deep attention she paid to it. Her correspondence was very extended. Her room was hardly without visitors from morning to night, giving account of commissions fulfilled, or taking directions where to go and what to do. It was often said by one of her active colleagues, that her departure would leave a void which there was scarcely a prospect of again filling with like activity

* She would sometimes say, 'We ought to run the race set before us. Every man and woman has a particular race—the race! I have known great confusion in congregations, because the managers will run the race of the minister, and the minister that of the manager.' A woman one day called on her Ladyship, and observed, such a person ought to act differently in her family.—'That is not your race,' said Lady E.; 'you run your race in your family, and leave her to run her race in hers.'

and intelligence. They indeed hoped it would be very distant; but her great Master ordained it otherwise.

"Her conversation was heavenly; and, when speaking of God's dealings with her own soul, none could express a deeper and humbler sense of their own unworthiness and nothingness. The sentiment she uttered the last evening of her life was, that 'The most holy are the most humble in their own eyes.' She improved every opportunity of converse with her friends who visited her, especially the young. Indeed, her whole time and thoughts seemed to be engaged in endeavouring to fill up her place; conscious of being highly honoured in the service of her Lord, and feeling it her delight as well as duty to discharge her trust, as she must answer to the great Shepherd, and Bishop of souls. She never set up for a preacher; she knew her place; yet many a preacher will own how much his spirit hath been quickened by her example and converse.* She was placed in a situation of considerable authority; but her directions were counsels, and her orders entreaties. The work of Lady Huntingdon's establishment had never been better consolidated, or more apparently prosperous, than on the day she left it; and nothing will more powerfully speak for her than such a testimony.

"Lady Anne had, for some time before her death, complaints which alarmed those who knew how much they should feel her loss; and though she struggled with ill health, and hardly suffered it to interrupt her labours, yet it was evident that the mortal tabernacle was failing. Her constant calls to business precluded her from exercise; and the stooping to write, with the sedentary life she led for weeks together, only moving from her room to the chapel, increased the dropsical tendency to which she had been for some time liable. The natural conformation of a strait chest rendered respiration often laborious, and on any quick motion asthmatic; yet her spirits so quickly rose, and her conversation became so enlivened, that apprehensions went off, and her friends seeing the case recur so frequently, were led to hope that her course might yet be prolonged. Those around her had often seen her apparently worse, and more feeble, than on the day preceding her dissolution.

"The frame of her mind indeed, seemed in preparation for an eternal world. Two or three mornings before her departure, she came much refreshed from her room, and said to a friend, 'The Lord hath met me this morning with so much sweetness of mind, that I seemed as if surrounded of God:' adding with fervour, 'My Lord and my God!' The day before her death she took an airing in a coach, and

* Her Ladyship's method of communicating spiritual encouragement was both pleasing and easy. One day a person called on her labouring under great distress of mind, and said, 'I was once happy in God; I enjoyed his ordinances, and thought I walked in the light of his countenance: but now all my joys are fled, I see myself a vile sinner, and feel no comfort in any thing, so that I think I never yet knew God, and shall at last be lost.' Lady Anne, smiling, said, 'O my friend, it is the same light, but God has taken it from your head to your heart, and has made you acquainted with your own abominations, for it must be light which discovers darkness.' This interesting remark, it is said, afforded the man very considerable relief of mind.

did not seem affected by it, but conversed as usual. The evening of that day she was visited by a gentleman of her acquaintance, and spoke in her usual spirited manner, as if nothing ailed her; and her health being the subject, she said, 'I have no presentiment of death upon my mind:' but she added, 'Be that as it may, God is faithful, and I feel unshaken confidence in him;' with many other expressions of the hope that maketh not ashamed. On going to bed Lady Anne said, as if under some doubt or difficulty, 'The Lord will reveal himself to me to-morrow!' The maid asked if any outward matters made her uneasy? She replied, 'No, in those respects I am perfectly easy.' These were the last words she was heard to utter. At six in the morning the attendant going to the bedside, saw her mistress reposed, her head on her hand, and thought her asleep. It was the sleep of death. Lady Anne lived to the age of sixty-five years; more than forty of which she had spent in the works of faith and labours of love, and was admitted to her eternal rest on Friday, October 5, 1804.

"Her mortal remains were removed in a hearse on the Saturday week following to Bunhill-fields burying-ground. The corpse was preceded by the Rev. Messrs. Kirkman and Clark, the former of whom read the burial service, and the latter delivered the funeral address at the grave. A funeral sermon was preached on the following Lord's day morning at Spafields chapel, by the Rev. James Clark, from Psalm, cxvi. 15, 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;' and another was delivered in the evening at Zion Chapel, by the Rev. Dr. Ford.

"On the tomb erected to the memory of her Ladyship is inscribed the following Epitaph:—

Beneath
are deposited the mortal remains of
THE RIGHT HON. LADY ANNE AGNES ERSKINE,
Eldest Daughter of the late
Earl of Buchan;
who departed this transitory life
October 5, 1804, Aged 65.
Being appointed
By the late COUNTESS DOWAGER OF HUNTINGDON
One of her Trustees
for the care and management of her Chapels after her decease;
She executed the trust
with great wisdom, assiduity, and zeal
during a period of more than Thirteen Years.
She was
Affable and condescending in her deportment,
Kind and generous to the poor,
and
Compassionate to the afflicted.
Her piety was sincere and unaffected;
Her life honourably useful,
and
Her death easy and happy.

On the demise of Lady Anne Agnes Erskine, Dr. Ford, a

physician of eminence, conducted the general affairs of the Connexion in concert with the Rev. Dr. Haweis and J. O. Oldham, Esq., then Mr. Robert Butcher, and afterwards H. F. Stroud, Esq.

The following gentlemen have been the Presidents of the College at Cheshunt:—

REV. ISAAC NICHOLSON.	REV. JOSIAH RICHARDS.
REV. ANDREW HORNE.	REV. JOHN JAMES.
REV. RICHARD OWEN.	REV. WILLIAM KEMP.
REV. HENRY DRAPER, D.D.	REV. JACOB KIRKMAN FOSTER.*

The present Tutors are,

REV. JOHN HARRIS, D.D., Theological Tutor,

AND

REV. JOSEPH SORTAIN, A.B., Philosophical Tutor.

* At the last Anniversary Festival of Cheshunt College, held in the grounds of the institution on the 4th of July, 1839, in the report read on that occasion we find the following, which it appears a duty to add, by way of note, to the name of the Rev. Mr. Foster:—

“It is the painful duty of the Trustees to announce, that, after a long series of faithful services to this Institution, in which his urbanity and official devotedness most closely endeared him to themselves and his students, the Rev. Jacob Kirkman Foster has tendered his resignation as President and Classical Tutor. They have, therefore, to entreat the prayers of their friends that Almighty wisdom would guide them in the choice of a successor.”

The editor of the “Monthly Record,” introducing a letter addressed by the worshippers at the Chapel connected with the College to the Rev. J. K. Foster, and containing a testimony of affection and regard, says:—

“The removal of our esteemed brother, the Rev. J. K. Foster, from the College at Cheshunt, has not only grieved his brethren throughout the Connexion, but is especially felt with painful affection through the neighbourhood of his long residence and labour. We subjoin the following letter as one of the numerous expressions of esteem and regret which Mr. Foster has received on leaving: the allusions are to the last texts and subjects to which he directed the attention of his beloved hearers at the College Chapel. We hope, in our next, to give a copy of a memorial of esteem and regret at his resignation, presented to Mr. Foster, signed by the Clergy and Dissenting Ministers, the Magistrates, Churchwardens, and most of the more respectable inhabitants of the parish of Cheshunt. Such a testimony of public estimation of talent and character is not often given.”

We ought to add, in justice to Mr. Foster, that this note is inserted during his absence and without his knowledge. Every testimony to a clergyman of her Connexion, especially to one holding, or having held, so responsible an office, is an indirect tribute to the memory of the Countess of Huntingdon, and finds its right place in these pages.

WE have now accomplished, as far as zeal and attention enable us, the task of setting forth these *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*. Numerous errors have no doubt crept in, and many deficiencies will appear which the absence of the Author may in part excuse. The Huntingdon Papers and Correspondence were placed in the hands of the Proprietor of this work by its estimable Author, with his full permission to make such alterations as might appear essential to successful publication. Partial reconstruction, occasional condensation, and frequent omission became necessary; and, for any error incident to these portions of his task, the *Editor*, and not the original writer, is responsible. To the reverend Author of the Introduction to each volume the work is greatly indebted. He read the whole of the MSS., favouring the Editor with the most useful suggestions, and carefully revised the text, watching over the correctness of the principles enunciated, and supplying, as far as ability, zeal, and knowledge could, the absence of the Biographer himself. The sentiments and opinions, then, had the sanction of the then President of Cheshunt College, but the Rev. J. K. FOSTER is not in any way responsible for errors of taste and judgment, for the style of language, the construction and arrangement, the omissions or additions—to all the faults of which the Editor pleads guilty; for he feels convinced that the errors will be found in the alterations and not in the original plan or text of the Author, who, it is to be hoped, will one day claim the credit which is so justly and exclusively his own.

In casting a retrospective glance at the design and subject of these now completed Memoirs, it cannot fail to strike the reader, that they present, in the most alluring and impressive manner, the loftier events of English history during the greater part of the eighteenth century. Lady Huntingdon was born in the seventh year after the commencement of that century, and was called to those happier regions ever present to her beatific vision, only nine years before its close. *One eighteenth portion of the whole period of Christianity!*—here was a distinct proof of the Divine favour. Seventeen lives, each as long as that of Lady Huntingdon, would nearly fill up all the links in the chain of time from the death of the Saviour to her own birth! The apostolical epoch, and the period of the primitive Church, yet pure and truly Christian, filled but three or four of those centuries; already the errors cendemned by the Fathers had infused themselves into sects and parties, and the family of Christ was broken into feuds; then followed the assumption of Papal supremacy, the arrogation of infallibility to the temporary tenant of St.

Peter's chair; and after these presumptuous heresies had claimed the most honourable epithet of *Catholic*—thereby degrading and restricting the universal Church to bigoted believers in the power of the Popedom—every species of corruption and abomination poured into the Church. The worship of the Virgin, the invocation of saints, the doctrine of transubstantiation, auricular confession, absolution, penance, purgatory, masses for the dead, sale of pardons, convents, and monasteries, with their pollutions, defiled the Christian world, and turned the heart of man from the worship of God in spirit and in truth to the repeating of prayers, to the telling of beads, and to a reverence for, if not the adoration of, images carved by the hands of man. The dedication of gifts to altars and statues, the investment of estates in priors and abbesses, and the infamous results of compelled celibacy in the clergy spread infection over every land. The people plunged in the depth of ignorance, the nobles at war with each other, the priesthood, under the name of learning, practising a systematic craft, public worship degraded to a drama or spectacle with every sensual attraction, as scenic illusion, concerted and voluptuous music, incense, banners, gems, and draperies; outward forms, genuflections, gestures, the ringing of bells, the waving of censers, the exhibition of relics, the elevation of the host, the homage of the wafer, and all the superstitious mummary of a perverted service, heathen and idolatrous in its ceremonies as antichristian in its doctrines, both of which are distinctly condemned at once by the Old and the New Testament. Did God leave himself without a witness in those times? No, assuredly. Many a sister of charity wept over human frailty, and devoted herself to soothing human misery. The true faith filled many a heart that wanted the apostle's fire to make it known; but even the preaching of the Gospel was not utterly neglected, though its truths were obscured under dark shadows, and its precious promises whispered under awe of human authority. There was not one SELINA in all those ages.

At length came the sixteenth century and the Reformation in England. The corrupted faith was purified, the tainted doctrines were rendered sound, the idolatrous practice swept away, and a consistent, reasonable, devout, and decent sacrifice was substituted. The position of the kingdom, the great majority of those who still practised or professed the ancient ceremonial, the interests of the old families, the clamours of the poor, the fastuous tastes of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, delayed the work. Then came the interruption to the Reformation caused by the death of Edward VI., and the accession of Mary. The Romanist ten-

dencies of the Stuarts, the excesses of the Puritans, the fearful disruption of society caused by the great rebellion, the recoil into the worst excesses of debauchery which followed the restoration, and the swerve backwards towards Popery under James II., still further impeded the progress of truth; but the equipoise of the Revolution of 1688, and the final settlement on the throne of Protestant principles in the House of Brunswick, were the most important of all the events that rapidly and overwhelmingly succeeded each other between the Reformation and the commencement of this history.

What, then, at the beginning of the eighteenth century was the state of religion in England? William III. was just dead, Anne ascended the throne in the first year of the century, and in her sixth year was Lady Huntingdon born. In 1714 George I. succeeded to the throne when the Countess was seven years old; in 1726, in her nineteenth year, George II. was crowned, and at his court and that of his son, the Prince of Wales, she spent the most brilliant period of her life; but she died in the thirty-first year of George III., whose reign began when she was fifty-three. Under four successive monarchs, then, had this distinguished Lady steadily pursued the noiseless tenor of her way. What, we repeat, was the state of religion in the early years of her life? We ask, and hope to answer the question, with a view to show what progress the good cause made in a single life-time, and to trace the fruit we now see ripening to the seeds then sown.

The head was sound, for on the throne sat a Protestant monarch, the defender of the faith, the visible head of the Church, owing no allegiance to, but repudiating the authority of, the Bishop of Rome, and acknowledging no right in any foreign power to interfere in the internal discipline of the Church. The Dagon of Popery had been cast down, his images broken, his temples defaced, and his ceremonies had become a mockery in the land; but they to whom was committed the especial guardianship of the Church, were all unworthy of their high calling, cold formalists, husky verbalists, who gave the chaff to the flock, denying the grain; human learning was exalted at the expense of deep conviction of the Gospel scheme of salvation. The old faith had appealed so to the imagination, the outward senses had been so courted as the adits to the inward feelings, that in the Protestant preaching the opposite error was approached. The reason and the judgment were set up—the feelings and the sentiments were trodden down. Appeals to the heart were undervalued, and argument was exalted over eloquence.

“Enthusiasm !” was the ready cry against all who would have roused the inward man, and reached the soul in their discourses. “Is he right?” “Does he argue ably?” “Is he a learned man?” were ordinary questions ; but “Is he earnest ? Does he plead to conviction ? Is he profoundly read in the Bible, and deeply imbued with the faith which leadeth to salvation ?”—no one asked. This was the general character of the Church, notwithstanding glorious exceptions which might easily be enumerated. The parson sat in the kitchen of the village inn, smoking tobacco and drinking ale with his parishioner, or he played the fiddle and attended at the merry-makings of the neighbourhood. He was pinched in means, and respected “for his cloth,” rather than for himself. A higher class hunted with the neighbouring gentry ; as magistrates joined then in the prosecution of poachers, and were game-keepers rather than soul-keepers ; mighty hunters before the Lord, but not eager in the pursuit of truth : fishers, but not fishers of men ! A still higher grade associated with the wits and *beaux esprits*, were fine gentlemen even in the pulpit, and gave the tone to their district. But the meek, the humble, the devout minister of religion was rarely to be met with ; the earnest, eloquent, persuasive, energetic, urgent messenger of the Gospel was almost unknown. The limits of duty, if reached, were never surpassed : the stipulated task performed, all further efforts were regarded “as supererogatory, and as partaking of the nature of sin :”—

“Except a few with Eli’s spirit blest,
Holphini and Phineas may describe the rest.”

If such were the shepherds, what were the sheep ?* A few only were Papists, but multitudes were daily becoming Dissenters ; the Socinian heresy was much encouraged, the Deists flourished, and there were those even who boasted of Atheism. The fool said in his heart there is no God. Lambeth palace had its balls and routs ; music parties for Sunday evenings, even the Bishops countenanced, and card parties were not unfrequent on the Sabbath evening. The humble classes imitated *their betters*, a sneer at religion was wit ; the parson was the standing joke, and the Church was used chiefly to rail at on account of the occasional levies it occasioned, and which appeared to recall its memory to the otherwise forgetful people. Hundreds of thousands of persons were without the means of religious instruction ; millions had never heard a sermon !

* Hic alienus oves custos bis mulgit in hora,
Et succus pecori, et lac subducitur agnis.

Such *was* the case with the Church of England. What is the picture now?

The education of the people, once opposed by all the great, is now the universal demand, and the contest of the two grand political divisions in the State is, not who shall best stave off the disagreeable necessity of general education, but who shall have the glory of advancing it—who shall have the power to influence and direct its course. This is not the place even to touch on the opposed and opposing views of political sections; it is enough to feel and acknowledge the directing hand of Almighty Providence in this conversion of the heart, in thus rendering the contention of princes subservient to the advancement of his glory and the good of humanity. “To the poor the Gospel is preached,” and “the poor read the Gospel,” are terms almost identical. The grand principle of the Reformation, the great prerogative of Protestantism, is that every man shall interpret for himself the Scriptures of the inspired of God. That neither councils, nor conclaves, nor traditions, nor authority, shall bind his conscience, nor come between him and his Creator and Judge. His communion of saints is direct converse with the apostles and prophets in the Sacred Volume. His creed is founded on knowledge, “what we have seen and known that we confess and declare;” what we have read and deeply considered with the aid and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, that do we believe unto salvation. Now, means are the agents and instruments of Divine Providence committed to the hands of men to work the will of Heaven, and among these means, in modern times, none is more potent than the discovery by which the Scriptures may be renewed for ever, and diffused to the uttermost realms of the earth, in number and quantity equal to the necessities of man. What the early Christian Church sought, by making a universal language—and commanding that in that “common tongue” all its ritual should be performed, is now accomplished, and to incomparably better purpose by the translation of the Scriptures into every language. This is the accomplishment of another day of Pentecost; the Holy Ghost again descends upon the messengers of Christ in the form of cloven tongues of fire, and they speak with tongues, and the multitudes of the whole earth are confounded, because every man hears them speak in his own language. “Parthians and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, all

hear or read in their own tongues the wonderful works of God." Nay, shores then unreached, seas yet uncrossed, people unknown, continents and islands unimagined, have received the Scriptures; the Old and New Testament have crossed oceans, of which the existence was unsuspected by them whose hands recorded the undying truths they contain. Regions of the earth, literally a new and greater world, have hailed the advent of the Messiah's kingdom, and wished good luck in the name of the Lord to those who came to them with knowledge and with power to reveal the secrets of Heaven, and to win souls, predestined by the foreknowledge of God, to an immortality of glory. The Educational and Missionary zeal of this day may well inspire faith, may well excite the imagination, and encourage the expectation of an immeasurable extent of unimaginable good. But to whom is chiefly due the present energy? To the Wesleys and the Whitefields, and in an extraordinary degree to the venerable subject of this memoir, whose zeal and piety were not content with wishing and praying, but prompted her to unappreciated sacrifices and incalculable exertion, crowned with a success which she never lived to know, which her highest ambition had not reached, which the utmost stretch of her imagination could barely have conceived. Could she look upon us now and hear of the millions educated, being, and to be educated, at least to the knowledge of the Scripture, or the power to attain that knowledge. Could she have seen Bishops glory in the attribute of Evangelical preaching. Could she have known an Archbishop foremost in the Reform of the Church, a Clergy eager and zealous, and tending every day, more and more, to the doctrines she most loved and valued, what would have been her joy? Had she seen Dissenters growing daily more liberal without being less pious, more forbearing without being less independent; churches rising on all sides; pastors founding and endowing churches at their own cost; laymen subscribing thousands to the erection of new churches, chapels, and schools; and societies formed for the advancement of missionary exertion, the diffusion of religious knowledge, the promotion of religion and the education of the universal poor; and could she have added to this crown of rejoicing, the conviction that her example had done much towards producing these effects, how would her pious heart have poured itself out in praise and thanksgiving. She and her associates were the pioneers to make the way smooth and the path straight for that army of which the main body is but now coming into the field. The advanced guard had difficulties to encounter which have long since been overcome, obstacles to

surmount which have been removed for years ; but to them were due, and to them chiefly, under Divine Providence, the blessings we now enjoy. The vast numbers marshalled under the banner of enlightened Dissent, and the vast host arrayed beneath the ensign of the Church, owe equally a portion of their strength and spirit to the sounding of the Gospel trumpet in the last century.

To Lady Huntingdon's interference in the affairs of the Grammar School at Repton, which, by her influence was restored to its original use, and its endowments properly applied, may be traced those extensive inquiries and consequent reforms which have exalted the name of a noble and learned Lord, and redeemed his many eccentricities. To the efforts made at Kingswood are due the civilisation of the colliers of the west, the miners of the south, and the pitmen and keelmen of the Tyne and Wear. To her missions in Yorkshire and those of her associates, may be referred the revival of religion and education in the manufacturing districts. The very names, "connexion," "society," &c., suggest that combination of effort and union of means which have wrought all the great improvements, civil and religious, as well as artistical and economic, of these latter years, and to her and her associates were these names, and the suggestion of these exertions due. She founded a College, and it continues ; since then two Universities have been erected — London and Durham ; and institutions like her own have been founded by emulous Dissenters of various denominations. She endowed schools and chapels, and supplied pastors to unfed flocks, and now a Church-Assistant Society, a Church-Endowment Society, and a Commission under Government for both purposes flourish, unmindful, perhaps of her who led the way. But her example, if unacknowledged, cannot fail to be felt, and that deeply. Nearly a hundred years was she sowing the seeds of that harvest that is now but ripening for the sickle. Still, her cry may be repeated—"the labourers are few." Much yet remains to do. In these pages, if they do not supply the plan, the spirit of the work may be discovered. The queen on her throne, the peeress in her castle, the lady in her mansion, the matron in her house, and the peasant in her cottage, have each and all their own circle of power to do good. Oh ! may they all feel the necessity of exerting themselves for their own good, and for the good of others. Let them all behold in these pages, as in a mirror, the perfect picture of a Christian woman ! The dutiful daughter, the exemplary wife, the affectionate mother, the constant friend, the benevolent mistress, the good neighbour, the loyal subject, the devoted Christian. All

this she was, with a depth of humility and self-accusation, that exalted her excellence. The christian virtue of *humility* was peculiarly hers—high birth made her not proud—great wealth made her not idle or luxurious—great beauty made her not vain—accomplishments and graces made her not affected—property bound her not to the earth. Her self-denial was equal to that of the early saints, without their idea of atoning by self-inflicted torture, for committed trespass. Her industry could not have been greater had she been doomed to earn her bread by the sweat of her brow. Courts and princes, and all distinctions she threw away without a sigh,—jewels and rich apparel she turned to means of charity without regret,—family alliances, and even the opinion of society she set at nought! Her honours, her wealth, her health, her time, her name, her all, she devoted to the great cause she had embraced, and she is now reaping her reward. Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest these records of her actions on earth; weigh them and consider her loss and gain; which now preponderates in the balance? and if thou, reader, wouldst share her crown, thou must be content to run her race. Admire her firmness, wonder at her constancy, be warmed with her love, and fired with her zeal. If her example be honourable, if her reward be great, it is in thy power to attain it. Every one within his own circle can do much, no more is required. Go thou and do likewise; and when thy efforts require a stimulus, revert to this record of the acts and thoughts of SELINA, COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

THE END.

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Seymour, Aaron Crossley Hobart

The life and times of Selina Countess of Huntingdon

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